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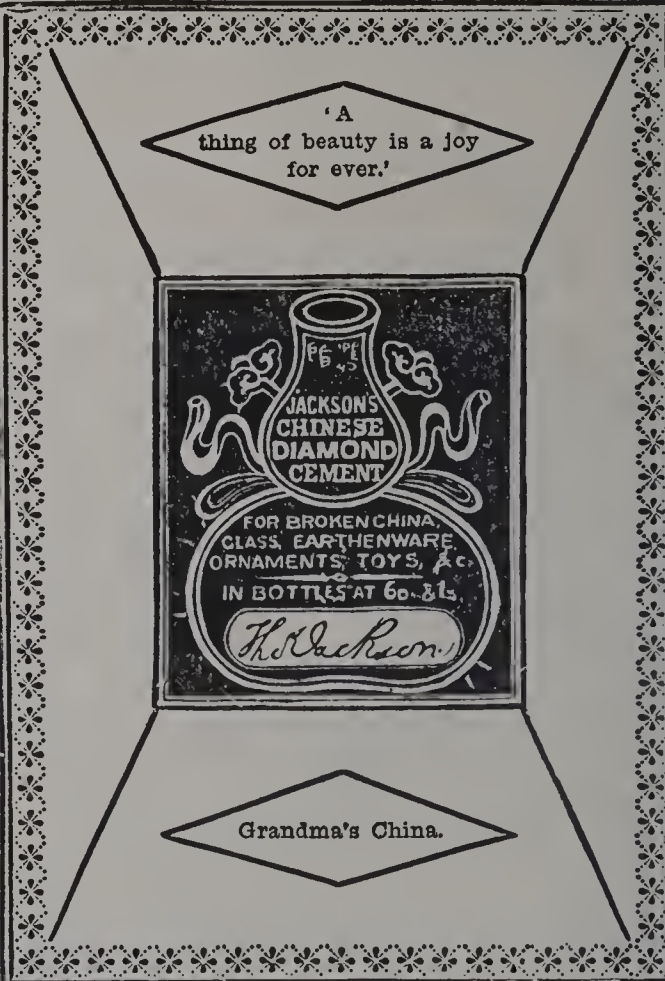
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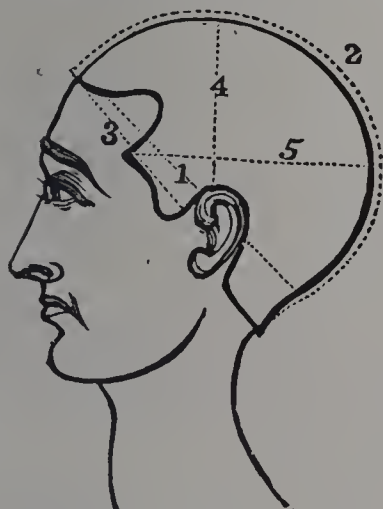
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PUBLISHERS: EGLINGTON & CO., 78 & 78a, GT. QUEEN STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS, W.C.

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EDITED BY

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NEW SERIES.

VOL. XV.—JANUARY TO JUNE, 1890.

London :

EGLINGTON & CO., 78 & 78A, GREAT QUEEN STREET, W.C.

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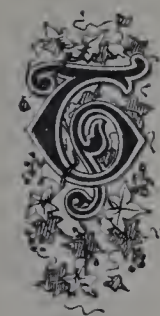


Round-the-Fire Stories.

LA BELLE ETOILE.

BY BEVIS CANE.

I.



THE whole city lay silent under a huge hush of snow. For ten hours it had fallen in a swift, hard powder, most intent on business, and as a consequence the deepest wrinkles of life were penetrated and its innumerable arteries blocked as effectually as mine-tunnels when the wind-hatch caves in. The first cold pioneer grains came down about six in the morning, and, finding flinty surface to repose on, sounded winter's voiceless *veille* for the awakening of their drowsy brethren above; and presently the white tents were struck, and the whole sky seemed moving downwards. All day the vast army was gathering below, and when at last about four in the afternoon its final stragglers dropped in, the domed and spired city was bonneted with sugared smoothness from hem to hem like a wedding cake for the gods. Then it was curious to contrast the subdual of the besieged streets with their relentless activity of yesterday. It was curious to see a great cabbage-loaded waggon, *sans* horse and carter, standing deserted at the very mouth of the Strand, and to watch two-legged commerce struggling over the pavements intent only on its footing, and wary of glass basement lights and the iron caps of coal-shoots. Down below, where the black blade of the river pierced the snowy crescents of Waterloo Bridge, a belated gull, mewling pitifully in utter forlornness, lost in dreary wonder at the outcome of his inland venturing, was slowly wheeling hither and thither in wide arcs; and, as the spectre darkness of the stoled evening gathered round

him, his voice came out of it in distant reedy wails, or broke suddenly with a thin scream at one's very ear, as he flashed past like a great ghost-moth in the gleam of the lamps.

All day, however, was traffic not wholly suspended, and determined drivers were to be found in plenty to goad poor beasts along weary miles of streets; and, as the white fall ceased, and the leaden sky ran into wisps of silver, these increased in number, until a muffled caricature of everyday liveliness was steaming and struggling onwards.

But such as ventured abroad on this treacherous turn of fortune soon had cause to repent them of their rashness, for scarce were the wings of evening spread over the city than some malignant fate set them abeating sternly, and a wind swept the streets such as, charging over long beds of snow, bit into the lungs with teeth as sharp as those of a North-American blizzard. Nor would the horrors of winter forego a single voice from their triumph, and when the blast was at its fiercest down came the white cloud once more, wild for a mad wreathing dance over chimney and house-top, demoniac as that of witches on the Brocken.

As a gust more furious than its fellows swept down the Strand, flushing its side-alleys like a wave of water, the door of a private house in Norfolk Street banged to, and a woman ran out into the storm. The wind caught her long fur boa, and writhed it aloft like a wisp of cotton; but despite its lashing across her eyes, so as to blind her for some moments, she sped at a round pace over the heavily-piled asphalt, with set teeth and thighs strung to tense action, little caring apparently whither her lost fate drove her. It took her in the first vigour of madness riverwards, not that she had in her mind any immediate thought of suicide, for present fury absorbed subtler and more corroding passions; but an instinct for the quieter passages of London life drew her, dizzy with rage of accumulated miseries, to the large freedom of the Embankment, where a smell of river-water sometimes came up to remind one of happy days spent on its surface fifty miles nearer the source, or even to suggest the freer memory of the sea.

And here in truth she found the loneliness desired of her tortured brain, for the icy flaw had swept the broad subway clean of all traffic; so that presently, in that vast picture of snow and striding bridges and dim gigantic buildings, the one dark little figure speeding onwards was the solitary sign of active life to be seen of chance gazers above.

She ran at the outset, braced to determination by her passion; but very shortly the push of laden wind at her skirts brought

her to a walk that seemed little better than a crawl from the pace that had induced her to it. Then, with the slowing of her footsteps, came the more regular pulse of mind that betokens reason, and she paused all of a sudden and threw up her arms with a shrill cry, such as the racing hare vents when he first feels the shot in his flank.

She was standing at the foot of Cleopatra's Needle, and her face was upturned to its cruel surface, whereon could be read—picked out now with tracing of white, as if the finger that once wrote upon the wall had been busy with them—the savage hieroglyphics that speak of the remorseless despotism of man. The snow made a crisp thatch of the short gold-ochre gleaming curls over her forehead, shadowing her eyes with a blur of chalky blue; but the Heaven from which the latter had borrowed their tint had never lent them the look that was in them now.

Suddenly she dropped her arms with a curious thin little laugh.

"La Belle Etoile," she said aloud; "it is not good to starve; there is only one course open to you."

Even as she spoke a man appeared, coming towards her out of the drifting obscurity. A great fur-collared coat wrapped him up to the eyes, and all his face visible was set into stiff puckers with anguish of the blast; but at sight of the standing woman it relaxed and came out of its shell a little, like that of a tortoise at smell of Spring.

She had her opportunity at the outset, but a strange small flutter beat under her stays at sight of it.

"My dear," he said, with a somewhat sickly smile, "have you lost your way?"

She knew what was coming next, and, despite the forced opinion she had formed of herself, felt a sting of great terror and shame enter her heart.

"Shall I show it you?" he went on, putting out his hand and clasping her softly by the elbow; "my way shall be yours, darling."

The strange contact of his touch angered her in a manner she had not anticipated. She gave a scornful laugh, and shook it off without glancing at him. Not to be beaten he took a quick step towards her, and slid his arm firmly round her waist. At this her nostrils expanded, and setting her teeth with a click, she flung herself free and struck out with her clenched fist. Monsieur's hat twirled in the air like a shot bird, and Monsieur himself, recoiling, stumbled and subsided—sitting upon his beautiful fur coat—into a snowdrift. In the meantime his assailant had taken to her legs

again, and was quickly lost to view in the driving mist of flakes.

But the fury that had fired up into her brain once more flickered low, even sooner than at first, and, as of necessity, her pace slackened into a walk again, a mental weariness supervened that was the first true foreshadowing of moral capitulation.

She paused, and looked about her. The snow made a vastness in the landscape that overwhelmed her heart with such a sense of loneliness as she had never felt before. She had known a horror, like a nightmare one in dreams, of being spurned and rejected by the cold phantom of love; she had shuddered for an outlet in the maze of delirium, but anything so despairing as the mood this savage desolation now wrought in her was foreign to her knowledge hitherto. Yet pride, that wears the crown of thorns no seldomer than the cap and bells, braced her even in her misery like a tonic, and she set her young shoulders square and called up fainting resolution to support her through the worst that might come.

"Fool!" she thought, "to spurn the devil when he offers me food and charity! He, that stranger, put a protecting arm about me, and I rejected him for a Heaven—good God, of what! *He* would have given me hot drink and forgetfulness, and a warm white bed, and here—flake upon flake, to prolong the agony, it falls upon me monotonous and quite pitiless."

She drew in her breath and stood erect for a moment, then once more bent her head, and, struggling onwards, addressed herself to the future with a look in her eyes that was not good to witness.

"It has to come," she muttered, "and the sooner I face it the better for Hell. There is no devil like habit."

On the thought she turned sharply to her right up a narrow lane amongst the houses known as George Court, which being as it were one of the many tributary streams of the flowing river of human-kind above, runs down from the Strand in a succession of falls or steps to the broader estuary of the Embankment.

"The frequented walks of life are for me now," she thought; "I am never to know peace again."

Halfway up the passage, a little huddle of human figures wriggled oddly against the whiteness. She felt no fear (for such succumbs to self-contempt) and hardly any curiosity; only an impatience was on her to pass all obstructions and know her fate.

As she neared the moving group, it resolved itself into a couple of slum-loafers struggling with a child. The latter was a small, shabby, sweet-faced elf, with a tattered flap of a hat set upon his shadowy gold curls. The former were mere ragged sewer-rats, and quite as filthy.

"Come," said one of the fellows, "le'go. D'you want your throttle strangulated, you whelp!"

There was a hoarse core in his throat that he kept choking up and swallowing again, and all the time he was tugging at something fastened round the child's neck—a gold crucifix, for the wonder of things!

The girl went by silently and did not interfere.

"What is it to me?" her hard face expressed.

But she had taken only a dozen steps onward when she stopped dead. Womanliness was too recent in her to abdicate its prerogative off-hand. A flush of blood swept to her brain. She turned and ran at the men with a screech.

"Let him be, you cowardly mongrels! Touch him and I'll bring a crowd about you such as you'll remember in your dreams."

She filled her lungs for a scream, and the rats scampered off. They had the instinct of their kind for avoidance of a furious termagant.

"Come," she said to the boy; "you shouldn't be here. Follow me to where the lights are, and then go home boldly."

She made her way up the passage, and climbed the narrow steps leading into the famous thoroughfare beyond. As she emerged upon its broad pavement the stern look came back to her eyes, and she shuddered and drew her jacket more closely about her, as if in self-protection from other terrors than cold. She had forgotten the child, and was surprised to feel a sudden little soft hand in her own.

"Go home!" she cried hoarsely, "I told you to go home!"

"Not yet," he said; "it is not time."

She had glanced down in wonder, partly at the pure pallor of his flesh, more at the very strange vibration of his young voice. True, he was a long way below her, and a stratum of stormy air swept between their faces, his looking up and hers down. Doubtless it was this that gave her the odd impression of being addressed from a distance—a long distance—as far back as her own youth.

She drew her disengaged hand across her eyes and tried to think.

"Go," she said, faintly; "what is it you want—money? I am as poor as you."

"I want to stop here," said he.

"With me?"

He clutched her hand more tightly.

"No!" she cried, peremptorily. "I am no companion for innocents. I have to earn food for this mouth and a bed for these wretched limbs."

"I can beg," he said.

"Beg!" She gave a scornful laugh; then a look of wonder came into her eyes.

"Who gave you that cross they tried to take away?"

"My father," he said.

"He should not have done it," she cried hurriedly, "or at least should bid you hide it when you walk abroad."

The child nestled his hand more firmly into hers.

"I should not like to do that," he said; "it is the cause of good actions sometimes."

She glanced down at him again with growing marvel. "You strange, original boy," she said; "what is your name?"

He answered her question with another: "What is yours?"

The girl drew herself up, and set her lips rigidly; yet it was queer that now she had no thought to draw her hand away, but rather essayed to retain the little palm pressed to hers.

"Tell me," he said.

"I have a fancy one—La Belle Etoile. Will not that do? It was given me by one I loved."

"And love still?"

"No!"

She spoke it with quick, harsh emphasis, and the next moment was aware of hot tears trickling down her cheeks.

"Come with me," he said; and without cavil or resistance she obeyed the impulse of the young guiding fingers.

They passed on and paused by the great iron gates of Charing Cross Station. Life seemed suspended in the mighty city—the hopeless shopkeepers were fixing their shutters; the theatres were empty; yet still traffic on wheels kept up a confused and noiseless movement.

Not so the drivers, however, a murmur of whose voices was in the air, expostulating with their own beasts, or at the contiguity of rival Jehus, as if in a stampede from some besieged town. Nearer, a single shrill, persistent boy broke the silence with a cry of "Ek-kō, speesholl!" which being interpreted signified a special edition of the *Echo* newspaper; but otherwise the voice of the city spoke as if buried under bedclothes.

"Let us stop here," said the child; "it is an opening gullet of traffic and a good place."

"For what?" said his companion.

"For asking charity," he said.

She flushed up crimson despite the cold.

"I have never done it," she said; "I could not do it."

"How were you going to earn your warm bed then?" he asked.

She looked away, and trembled slightly.

"Ah, do not sin!" he cried, pathetically.

She stamped her foot and turned sharply on him. "Are you preaching?" she cried. "I think, after all, you are nothing but a methodistic brat. Go home! I am weary of you."

"I am only a little child," he said, "but of such is the kingdom of Heaven—of such is your own dead baby."

Then, for the first time, she snatched her hand away, panting quick, and looking almost with terror at her small comrade.

"How did you know?" she cried, hoarsely. "Are you a witch's child—a changeling!"

"Hush!" he said, "it is such a common little story that even a child may learn to read its signs."

He came round to her other side and took her left hand.

"You loved him?"

"I loved him and trusted him," she said, as if forced to speak.

He lifted her hand and felt at its third finger. Moved by his suggestive action, she tore her glove off and, seeing what was gone, dashed her palm to her forehead.

"You have taken it!" she cried.

"And your glove over it!"—he smiled. "What right have you to a wedding ring?"

Suddenly his childish tones took to themselves a strange, stern ring.

"For years you have posed before your fellows—a lie. You are not an honest woman, for you loved him, but did *not* trust him as you say. What! were you, too, not in your secret heart a party to that false ceremony of marriage you went through with him? He thought to deceive you, but you were not deceived, and outraged God's sacrament knowingly for the love of man. And now your baby is dead and you have been ill; and he is weary of you and has revealed himself to you and cast you off. Your last appeal for help he has rejected. The cupboard is empty; no home is yours; and so, in the common course of things, you would consummate that which was begun in falsehood, and degrade yourself lower than the foul mongrel that solicits but of one mate, and that for no gain but nature's. See—it is on your finger again."

She had crouched back into an angle of the iron railings, breathing quickly and gazing in terror.

"Who are you?" she whispered; "how did you learn my story?"

He held out his hand palm upwards. Slowly she slipped the lying ring from her finger and flung it from her into the snow.

Then, as she crouched again, a happy look stole over the child's face, and his voice relaxed once more to its tender treble.

"La Belle Etoile," he said, "inasmuch as you helped me in my distress, shall I not help you?"

He held up his hand.

"Hush! do you hear in the distance the swish of that swinging door as it flaps to? Father, be just with this bad man, and merciful, Father, if it may be."

II.

THE swing door rocked lingeringly to behind Mr. Assistant-Secretary Michael Gask, of a great government office in Whitehall, when, his routine of work completed, he stepped out into the snow, as if it waved him a farewell for the last time, being grieved to see the final exit of so efficient a public servant. Mr. Gask's immediate principal, the permanent secretary, had shut down all troublesome petty affairs of state under the lid of his inkpot a good two hours before, and gone home to his mutton—or what poor substitute for it he could afford on a meagre salary of £2,000 or so a year—but Mr. Gask himself, whose dignity fell short of the other's by some 800 annual pounds, was habitually constrained thereby to postpone his own exit till he had tested every knot Mr. Permanent Secretary had tied in the day's mile or so (divided and sub-divided) of red tape, and tried their strength with his official teeth, which were very sharp and strong if not pretty to look at. Mr. Gask and his chief, however, were on excellent terms, being, indeed, long fellow-workers in other walks of life than the crooked ones of State, and in the matter of business conveniences were, to use a sharper's term, accustomed to "play into one another's hands." Thus Mr. Assistant-Secretary found a positive pleasure in loitering after strict office hours to articulate dry skeletons of formalities, the bones of which his principal had been engaged in sorting during the day, and if the public did not gain in point of purse through wasted gas thereby, at least it enjoyed a moral illumination which was very brilliant and touching.

Personally Mr. Gask was not handsome to look at; and in this he had the disadvantage of Mr. Permanent Secretary, who, at least so far as outward gifts were concerned, was quite a model of a high government official—tall, grave, thin, and well-proportioned, and inclining to baldness about the temples. But Mr. Gask was a humourist, and what is your humourist if handsome and cleanly built. He would be as completely out of touch with his character as a jockey with a "bow-window." People would not laugh at

his sallies at all, but would curve the lip of contempt at him for making such an exhibition of himself.

And Mr. Gask was fortunate in looking his part. He was a short, muscular, wedge-featured man with a slight stoop in his shoulders, such as characterises consumptive celibates, and a dry face that fell into habitual creases of expression like a Gibus' hat. His eyes were squeezed up between hard lines of lid till they seemed mere black sparkles, and this in spite of the baldness of the brows above, which suggested nothing so much as faint smears of iron-mould. His voice was nasal, his speech rapid, his hands were hard-palmed and sharp-knuckled, his cheek-bones prominent and tinged commonly with an hectic flush. When he spoke, something went up and down in his temples, as if his jaw-bone had fangs that moved there, and his clothes always looked like other people's misfits. Such was Mr. Gask as he left his office in Whitehall that snowy night, and so had he been since boyhood.

Humour was the pulse of his life. His official *Fidus Achates*, the permanent secretary, loved him for it and traded upon him for it, being himself deficient in the original faculty. But he could appreciate what he lacked, and find a very intense pleasure in taking advantage of the outcome of practical jokes, if not levelled against himself. Undoubtedly he was suitably placed as to his official position, and undoubtedly he was fortunate in his lieutenant.

The opportunities afforded the two of indulging their whimsicalities at the expense of the public were numerous, as anyone who has studied the *pros* and *cons* of circumlocution may well imagine; yet it was in their private characters that they most luminously shone. Ex-officially it was whispered that they had once delayed the despatch of a reprieve by the cleverest artifices, until he whom it affected had ceased to need it; but this was nothing to their display of *esprit present* in the face of social stumbling-blocks to morality. Not that Mr. Permanent Secretary ever permitted his subordinate to take such advantage of the understanding existing between them as to give him, as it were, a power of blackmail over his chief. Far from it; he cried on Mr. Gask like a hound in pursuit of their mutual game; he stood by smiling while the quarry was being pulled down, but the brush once secured, he expected his whelp to retire peaceably to mumble his bone in the kennel. And Mr. Gask raised no objection. He was of those who, coveting that for themselves which they hate in others—the claim to patronise—are ever eager to return to the vomit which their master's contemptuous kick on the ribs has caused them to throw up.

If Mr. Permanent Secretary had a fault, it lay in a weakness for a pretty face, and a *penchant* for sexual intrigues. It was an amiable characteristic in so great a man, and doubtless supplied an excuse for that faltering side to official life which is observable in the sternest departments of State. And herein his lieutenant proved himself an invaluable ally, inasmuch as being himself something indifferent to the gentle influence of Ma'mselle Babette's *beaux yeux*, he could with infinite safety further his patron's artifices in such pursuits, and never chance to be led to play the part of Proteus to the other's Valentine. What if sick moralists should be inclined on this account to unflatteringly dub him—something that it is nicer not to speak, but which rhymes with “limp”? Sick moralists are notoriously not humourous.

Revenons à nos moutons.

The swing-door fluttered to behind Mr. Gask, with a flapping breath like a long-drawn sigh of relief, and Mr. Gask was friendlily pushed by the galloping wind on his way—whither?

Why, he was engaged to dine with his chief *tête-à-tête* at the latter's chambers in Norfolk Street, and there plan out the pathway leading to a fresh intrigue.

III.

“*La Belle Etoile*,” said the child, “it is far, far better to beg than to do this thing. You affect wicked sophistries on pretence of winning bread that you may not starve. It is not bread you want, but the spiced food of that mad gaiety that conquers sweet reason. You would cool the hot blood of fever with rich meats, as the drunkard in despair swallows new death to appease the devil he has himself raised.”

His tones reached her, despite the uproar of the storm, as distinctly as the gentler voices of delirium. She was leaning back, an arm thrown round her eyes, her bosom rising in quick, hard pulses. The snow spun in upon her waiting thus, and wrought of her a statuesque shape such as might befit the lime-lit alleys of a modern garden of Eden.

“Be pure,” said the child; “for you can be pure even in sin, where your fault is single-hearted.”

“What am I to do?” murmured the woman. “I have no home.”

“Aye, that you have,” answered the other gently, “even if the way is sadly rugged to it. But for desolation! Ah, you know it not! You have the streets—companionship—at least the warm earth. Pass hence in crime and unrepentant, and knowledge of the worst shall be yours.”

"What desolation can be worse than this?" she whispered.

He pointed upwards through the whirling mist. "There!" he said, very low, "in the infinite fathoms of space, where you may wander this world's lifetime thrice told, and meet no palpable shape; where comes the swift knowledge that you have been given your chance and meaninglessly rejected it, and that that little life set in immensity, that one sparkling grain of sand from the desert centuries, can never be yours again to do with as you will; where you shall float in your immortal imperviousness, and be powerless to cease; where you shall find no balm, no comfort for the nervous terrors you have learned to magnify and abhor on earth. You talk of homelessness. The world is your home, and not one individual quadrangle of brick and plaster upon it. But, for the rest—they tell you Hell is fire. I say to you that Hell is loneliness utter and complete."

She threw out her arms with a gesture wild and despairing.

"What would you have me do," she cried, "you, who are God or devil!"

"Beg," said the child, "that your baby may smile in Heaven."

"It is all useless, and I should only court the notice I deprecate."

"It is easy," said the child; "see, I will show the way."

He left her for a moment, and stepped boldly forth. As he did so, a wild clap of wind spun the drifting snow about them aloft, like a spout of foam raised by the ricochet of a ball at sea, and in the midst of the shadowy spume she was aware of a dim shape going by to which the child seemed to address himself.

He came back to her, holding something in his hand—a gold cross and chain such as that he wore.

"This is given you to use as you will," he said. "Let me put it about your neck."

Wonderingly she bowed her head, as before some sacred altar, and he slipped it over, so that its sparkle lay upon her bosom.

"Ah, wretched lost beast that I am!" she cried with a sudden wailing shriek, "what was I thinking of doing! I see a degraded sodden drab reeling along into the future, and a sorrowful child's face watching her from a sky of great clouds. Not for you, my baby, my baby, this last disgrace! You shall think of me as mother yet!"

She fell upon her knees in the snow, sobbing and writhing in her great agony, the child looking down upon her.

"When I placed this on your neck," he said, touching the chain, "I saw lace and rich furs, and the glitter of a ruby. It was not to win a way from starvation you came here."

"I have sinned," she said, crying bitterly, "and am not worthy to live."

The other stood regarding her with smiling lips and pathetic eyes.

"Forgive your worst enemy," he said, gently, "and be at peace."

"Yes," she answered, "if I may go to my little child."

He took her hand eagerly.

"Rise," he whispered, "for there is work for you to do! A man goes past in the dark. Through humility and tribulation must be your path to that you desire. Follow, then, and ask charity of him."

* * * * *

Mr. Gask was painfully struggling onwards towards his dinner in no very sweet mood, when a woman came up behind him and begged an alms of him in the name of Heaven. He was about to return her a peevish refusal, when a characteristic flash of the humour he loved suggested a more original course to him. He called to mind a certain brass button lying in the ticket-pocket of his overcoat, and fetched it out forthwith between finger and thumb.

"We are a pair, my poor girl," he said with averted face, and in a well-conceived voice of the broken unfortunate; "God knows where I shall sleep to-night, but—take this. Better that I should starve than you."

He pressed the button into her hand, and hurried on with a concealed grin, while the girl stared after him, the gift lying unkenneled in her palm.

But the next moment the secretary was aware of a swift step pursuing him, and of the pressure of a little flat disc thrust into his hand.

"Take it back!" cried the girl, "do you hear! I didn't know and I don't need it as you do."

If a faintest blush tinged his sallow cheek at this unexpected outcome of his pleasantry, the better for him a minute later. Pity grant that it was so, for to pass beyond into such loneliness as the child had described should be a horror it were better not to think of.

At least Mr. Gask was for a moment at a loss what to do, and in that moment he turned his ferret face towards the girl, who shrieked and staggered back, and shut out the sight of him with her hands.

In a breath the child was at her side.

"Forgive your worst enemy," he whispered.

"It is the devil who wrought my ruin!" she cried, passionately. "That other was too slow a knave to devise the means, and this dog played the false registrar, and planned the jest that I was too loving a fool to question."

"Hush!"—the child raised his hand. "The great bell of your city that marks the pulse of law is clanging his doom to the winds. The seventh stroke has gone; on the fall of the eighth and last he will lie beneath your feet."

Even as he spoke, the mouthing of the giant tongue and throat came in one deep syllable, and a scream cleft the galloping wind at their very elbows.

Mr. Assistant-Secretary had stepped from the pavement under the noses of two panting and straining omnibus horses, and before the coachman could draw on his reins, he was down and the heavy wheels had crunched over his chest.

"Vengeance is Mine!"

Was it the child who spoke? It seemed to come like a stern whisper from overhead.

But the girl was on her knees at the dying wretch's side.

"Gasp one prayer to Heaven!" she urged, in horror of the blood that gushed from his mouth. "For me—I forgive you."

He knew her, and shaking like an aspen in the throes of death, tried vainly to shut his eyes, the lids of which were sliding upwards. Kind force was used to remove her, and she became aware of standing once more upon the pavement, with the child at her side.

"Come!" he said, "the terror is past. It lies no longer in that bleeding mass."

He looked upwards, infant as he was, with such an awful expression as might betoken his glance pierced the thick darkness to where some quailing horror passed higher and higher. Then once more his blue eyes sought hers in tenderness.

"Let us go home," he whispered.

She pressed back the wild hair from her temples, and looked at him confused, marvelling, half-fainting. The little tragedy had passed away, the storm swept by more furious than ever, the streets were deserted.

"You foretold his death," she panted fearfully; "in Christ's name who are you, and whence comes your knowledge?"

"I have argued with learned Doctors," he said.

"When?" she whispered, and he answered with a smile:

"More than eighteen centuries and a half ago. Come with me—home."

* * * * *

The station-yard gates stood open all night, for the heavy drift had clogged them in a way that it was beyond man's strength to oppose. But with the morning, they found huddled up on the steps of the

Cross of Charing the dead body of a woman, with her arms thrown about the monument, and her stiff cheek pressed to the stone.

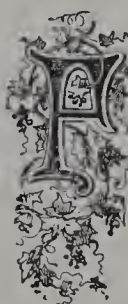
Adieu, La Belle Etoile, poor loving sinner ! Whither art thou gone ; and thy little comrade, what was he ?

Who shall say—yet the night of that cruel storm was the Eve of God's Epiphany !



Ballade of Christmas Numbers.

By CLIFTON BINGHAM.



FATE cannot harm me—after dinner
 Give me my pipe and an easy chair ;
 Call me, O stoic, a gilded sinner ;
 Comfort there is in old-world fare,
 Winter crisping the Christmas air ;
 Only a throng besets one's slumbers
 Ghostly—such as bade Macbeth 'ware—
 Long processions of Christmas numbers !

Heroines than La Bernhardt thinner ;
 Lovers parting in deep despair ;
 Tiny Tims—(ah, dead story-spinner,
 These pale shapes are not what thine were !)
 Moated mysteries ; eyes that glare ;
 Every hearthstone a ghost encumbers ;
 Phantom steps on a winding stair—
 Long processions of Christmas Numbers !

Somehow, they bring the heart an inner
 Consciousness of much change and care ;
 Ah me, I was a young beginner
 Once, though I now show wear and tear ;
 Age and I at each other stare,
 Nodding, like two old volume-thumbers,
 Over the pages once deemed rare,
 Long processions of Christmas Numbers !

ENVOY.

Prince, though Fate, that artist spare,
Illustrates Life in solemn umbers.
Still be our motto *vogue la galère*,
Recollect—these be Christmas Numbers !



The Musical Conductor.

BY FRED LESLIE.



THE reader who has the good taste to read this short essay may be regarded, on that account, as a person of judgment and intelligence, and is probably, therefore, a close observer of human nature. To him, then, I need not appeal for belief; to him, man is the proper study of mankind, and out of his own experiences, he may evolve many characters as remarkable as the one which I am about to introduce. But I would warn him against general and indiscriminate repetitions, for the majority of folks take humanity in the crowd and are at no pains to mark individual idiosyncracies. To such as these the specimen I place before you might seem to be a fabulous and impossible creature, and my reputation for rigid veracity, which gained for me the prize of virtue in my native village, may receive its first blemish. But thou, philosopher, hast noted how prone are men—some men—to use in common converse the language of the laboratory, the study, the counter, the stage, or of such other departments of life to which it has pleased Providence to call them. The subject of my sketch was one of these afflicted ones, and he had it badly.

It was in the early days when I was playing at the Royalty Theatre, and journeyed daily to and from my eyrie in North London by the humble but convenient Brecknock 'bus. It was then that I became acquainted with the musical conductor, who is well remembered along the road to Kentish Town, and I was struck,

like many more, with his peculiar style, which, however, soon grew familiar and intelligible. To give you a sample, he would run on thus :—

“Good day to you, sir ; knew you were a singer at first sight. *Do re mi fa sol* ; I know ; musician myself—played the cornet all last summer ; Margate ; on the sands ; you know. Find my musical education useful now I’m a *conductor*, you see ; very large *staff* on these yellow ’busses, sir ; even the ’bus, you notice, plays *piano* on the wood, *forte* on the macadam, and *fortissimo* on the granite. Yes, they’re mending the road here. *Staccato* ; steady, Bill ! *andante* over the stones ; driver a bit *crotchety* sometimes. Redcap, madam ? *Rallentando*, Billy. Lady descendant—*coda* to the corner. Here you are, gents, Charing Cross and Victoria ! Full inside. Can I *transpose* any gentleman to oblige a lady ? *Full score*, Bill ; *allegro*, not too *presto* down the hill. The old ’bus *shakes* like a *cadenza*. *Morendo* past the square. All right, William, *accelerate* the movement—*crescendo, crescendo ! troppo diminuendo ! moderato !* Difficult to keep *good time* on this road ; so many *sustained passages*, you see. Your *finale*, sir—Horse Shoe ; *bar’s rest*. Thanks ! Scotch, *sans accompagnement*.

Perhaps you knew him.



The Convent Maid.



SUMMER is dying,
All dear things flying,
The soft wind wets our great tulip tree ;
Wild leaves are borne
Over bed, over lawn—
Mary, sweet mother, I moan to thee !

Hush ! May I weep ?
The good sisters sleep,
The moonlight's blown down the convent roof,
And strange faces wait
At the iron-barred gate,
Now intent—now holding dimly aloof.

Hush ! did I hear
Faint talk at my ear ?
My heart beats thickly, mine eyes are wide ;
This world is so thin
That I tarry in,
And I know no thought of the road outside.

The wild leaves go,
Mother dear, and blow
Through the iron-barred gate and are seen no more,
Where the dark is strange,
And those faces change,
Like incense smoke on the chancel floor.

Mother dear, see !
My hair blows free,
Like the leaves out into the sweet cold dark,
And, ah ! is it sin
To feel within
Thoughts that rush free of the convent park ?

Hush ! the wind drops,
The mad race stops,
And the wet soft silence comes up to me,
Like the breath, I wis,
Of a holy kiss,
That lights on the forehead low warningly.

But the air is full
Of a mystic lull,
And I hear my own heart panting out
For a flight through the grate
Of the iron-barred gate,
Where bodiless voices clang and shout.

Sancta Maria
Genetrix dea—
Hold me, mother ! stay me ! I must go !
I am thy child—
But the wind rushes wild,
And I long, I long to follow it so !

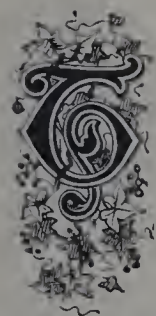
B. B.



In and Out of Shakespeare.

By the Author of "Shakespeare Diversions."

II.—TOUCHSTONE IN ARDEN.



TOUCHSTONE'S responsive echo of Rosalind's utterance "Well, this is the Forest of Arden," breathes no effusive spirit of gratification. "Ay, now am I in Arden; the more fool I; when I was at home I was in a better place." That is the first impression Arden made upon the fool—the more fool he for ever setting foot in it.

Touchstone is a Court fool, and is become imbued with the prepossessions, tastes, and habits of Court life. Why could he not have stayed there? Why go so much further to fare so much worse? After some acquaintance with the ways of the forest, and familiar associations with its denizens generally, and with one homely but delectable native in particular, he can answer, ambiguously indeed, yet discriminatingly, and after a sort distinctly, the old shepherd's query, How likes he pastoral life on the whole? Sagely he recognises the much that is to be said on both sides. He see-saws somewhat; he hums and ha's a little; he likes and he dislikes; he would and he would not; but on the whole his first impression seems to be a lasting one; namely, the more fool he for being in Arden at all.

One of Charles Reade's matter-of-fact fictions deals with a cockney autobiographer, rude but racy in style, whose forest experiences across the ocean may remind us, with a wide margin for *murtatis murandis*, of

That motley clown in Arden wood,
Whom humourous Jaques with envy view'd.

as Scott has it in one of the "Marmion" preludes. "Here was I lost in what they call a wood out there, but we should call a forest at home"—in the heart of which the new-comer was dismayed by unaccountable noises and nondescript alarums uncountable, "and didn't I wish I was in the Seven Dials," a spot the homesick complainant would find it hard to discover in Shaftesbury Avenue days.

Pitched in the same key is the strain of Master George Tuberville, the Elizabethan emigrant, who wrote home as if from the wilds of Russia, though, in point of fact, from within the walls of Moscow :—

My Dancie, dear, when I recount within my breast
My London friends and wonted mates, and thee above the rest,
I feel a thousand fits of deep and deadly woe
To think that I from land to sea, from bliss to bale did go.

Seven times over in a single scene does Molière's Geronte iterate and reiterate the piercing note of interrogation, unanswered and unanswerable, "*Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?*" just as "*Qu'allais-je faire sur les ondes?*" is the burden of the French poet Léonard's lament, who, at sea, like Gulliver, deplored "his own folly and wilfulness," and so bitterly, because so unavailingly, wished himself ashore. "Now would I give a thousand furlongs of sea for an acre of barren ground," protests old Gonzalo in "The Tempest." Why rashly would the Odyssean Telemachus "his fate explore, ride the wild waves, and quit the safer shore?" There is a sea-fight in "Roderick Random," during which we have a glimpse of the purser seated on the floor wringing his hands and cursing the hour in which he left his peaceful profession of a brewer at Rochester to engage in such a life of terror and disquiet. But we are getting all at sea. So back again to an American forest in the opening scene of Colman's "Inkle and Yarico," with almost the opening words of Trudge, the travelled cockney: "What a fool was I to leave London for foreign parts! That ever I should leave Threadneedle Street to thread an American forest, where a man's as soon lost as a needle in a bottle of hay." (George the younger had the start of the Byrons and Burnands in free-handed broadcast punning of this needle and thread sort.) From gay to grave, from lively to severe, is our transition to the silent waste, in the second of Collins' "Eclogues," with the driver Hassan urging his camel across it, he murmuring and moaning the while,

"Sad was the hour, and luckless was the day,
When first from Schiraz' walls I bent my way,"

to a region where he felt as much out of his element as A. H. Clough did when, very differently circumstanced or conditioned, he was moved to the wailing regret—

"Ye flags of Piccadilly, which I hated so, I vow
I could wish with all my heart ye were underneath me now."

Wayland Smith, in "Kenilworth," apostrophised his misplaced and imperilled self: "Were I once safe . . . in Smithfield or Turnbull Street, they should have leave to hang me as high as St. Paul's if

I e'er meddled more with nobles, knights, or gentlewomen !” So again Cuddie Headrig in “Old Mortality”: “They’ll be cunning that catches me at this wark again ; I like the pleugh-paidle a hantle better.” And in “The Pirate” we have Triptolemus Yellowley exclaiming, “If they catch me whale-fishing again, I’ll consent that the fish shall swallow me as he did Jonah.” And, once more from Sir Walter, in “Rob Roy” there is Bailie Nicol Jarvie wishing his boots had been full of boiling water when he drew them on for a journey to the Highlands ; it must be something momentous indeed that should ever take him out of sight of St. Mungo’s steeple again. Now that he was in Rob Roy’s country, however romantic, amid glens and passes however picturesque, why, like Touchstone in Arden, the more fool he.

Philarète Chasles describes “*le bouffon qui se nomme Pierre-de-Touche*,” as picking out, by process of natural selection, in Arden, the very ugliest and most uncouth of its native *bergères*, and idealising her into a Dulcinea. There is not much in Touchstone’s ironical portraiture of Audrey to warrant this ascription of an ideal to *Pierre-de-Touche*. “A poor virgin, sir ; an ill-favoured thing, sir”—so he appraises Audrey in the presence of the dons—“but mine own.” There all the merit lies. There is a saving virtue in a but. Touchstone’s but redeems all that went before. Poor thing as Audrey was, he had a proper pride in her—the pride of property in her, the pride of absolute proprietorship. He was her owner, for she was his own. Ill-favoured, uncouth, unseemly in deportment as Audrey distinctively was, Touchstone had appropriated her, and that was enough. Grant to the French critic that *ce drôle, ce Pierre-de-Touche*, had idealised Audrey into a dulcet, douce, delectable Dulcinea, at any rate he had realised her, too, as a bit of real property, his own and his only.

The question put is soon answered in “The Angel in the House :”

“Say, how has thy Beloved surpass’d
So much all others ?” “She was mine.”

Cecilia Traves is accounted by Kenelm Chillingly handsome enough to please the eye of any man, but not of that kind of beauty which dazzles all men too much to fascinate one man ; for he apprehends that the love for women has in it a strong sense of property ; that one requires to individualise one’s possession as being wholly one’s own, and not a possession which all the public are invited to admire. “I can readily understand how a rich man, who has what is entitled a show place, in which the splendid rooms and the stately gardens are open to all inspectors, so that he has no privacy in his own demesnes, must cling to a pretty cottage

which he has all to himself, and of which he can say, ‘This is home—this is all mine.’” The bird’s nest may be a poor affair, but it is the bird’s own—its home :—

“Its home? straw, twig, and wool, and hair.
Mere nothings, these, to house or herd.
Who made them something, made them fair,
Making them all his own? The bird.”

The author of “Back-log Studies” complains that people have houses, now-a-days, as they would a masquerade costume, and protests that he would almost as soon think of wearing another person’s clothes as his house. “It has almost come to this, that you might as well be anybody else as yourself.” When Charles Lamb took a cottage in Colebrook Row, “a white house with six good rooms,” alongside of the New River, “I feel like a great lord, never having had a house before,” he wrote to Bernard Barton; and a week or two later again, “I continue to estimate my own roof comforts highly. How could I remain all my life a lodger?” Like Crabbe’s country gentleman on taking possession who from the window looked the valley o’er,

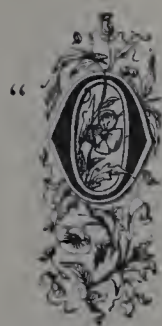
And never saw it look so rich before.
He view’d the dairy, view’d the men at plough,
With other eyes, with other feelings now,
And with a new-form’d taste found beauty in a cow.

Had Touchstone settled in Arden, no doubt he would or could have idealised a hovel for habitation, as he did an Audrey for wife, simply for the fact and in the act of making it his own. There might have been a dash of irony in his appropriation clause, in the one case as in the other. For Hazlitt is not talking without book when he insists on the courtly jester’s tendency to the ironical. And just as the lofty tone of enthusiasm which the Duke and his companions in exile spread over the stillness and solitude of a country life, receives a pleasant shock from Touchstone’s sceptical determination of the question, so his courtship of Audrey almost seems to throw a degree of ridicule on wedlock itself. This “rare fellow,” as Hazlitt designates him, this mixture of the ancient cynical philosopher with the modern buffoon, who turns folly into wit, and wit into folly, just as the fit takes him is, by this critic’s opinion, not in love, but he will have a mistress as a subject for the exercise of his grotesque humour, and to show his contempt for the passion by his indifference about the person.

How I Spent My First Sovereign.

BY ANNIE HUGHES.

(Dedicated to Miss Vane Featherston.)



"O H, mother! a birthday present of a whole sovereign! What shall I do with so much wealth? I shan't know how to spend it."

"Spend it on others, dear, and not on yourself, and see how much good you can do with it." This was my mother's advice. I must confess I didn't at all like the idea of not spending it on myself, for I wanted so many things; Christmas coming, too, and the shop windows full of pretty toys. Perhaps that's what mother means. I was to buy toys for other children, and none for myself. I took the gold piece in my hand; it was beautiful. Fancy its being all mine; I who had only had sixpence-a-week, and now to have forty all at once.

How should I change it? This was my first thought. And who should I change it with? Or should I put it away in a box, only to look at? And then if I must change it, how should I spend it? I seemed suddenly to have a great responsibility thrown upon my young shoulders—the trouble of spending a sovereign on other people.

My ninth birthday passed off very well. I didn't shed one tear; this meant I was to have a happy year. The next day I felt quite grown-up, for I had a purse with a gold piece in it, and I was going to the bank, yes, to the bank, with my governess to change it; it looked so much better when you wanted change for a large amount—I thought a sovereign a very large amount then.

I have never forgotten that morning. How proudly I marched into the London and Westminster with my treasure, and deposited it upon the desk, and asked the cashier 'if he would change me a sovereign all in sixpences?'—evidently that was my favourite coin in those days.

He smiled very kindly upon me, and said: "Certainly, little lady; would you like as many new ones as I can find?"

"Oh, yes, please, give me all you have." I wondered then why everyone laughed.

Out of the bank I went prouder even than when I entered it, for as well as having a purse, I had a bag now, with such a lot of bright, jangling things in it, all knocking against one another, eager again to be free, and be the means of making a lot of little boys and girls happy, for wasn't I going to spend them on other people, though I must keep one or two for myself. I wanted a new hoop very badly, and that would cost quite a shilling.

I stood outside the bank, right in everyone's way, thinking very deeply. I was roused from my reverie by a laugh—my governess unable to restrain her mirth any longer, had to give way to her feelings, and laughed immoderately. It was cruel of her, and I began to cry. I'd been so happy, but now everything was changed. I know she didn't mean to be unkind, she was only amused at what I had done, and the serious effect it had had upon me afterwards. But my pleasure was ended ; my smiles changed to tears and very bitter ones ; I didn't want to spend any of the money now, but go home, and pour out all my troubles into my mother's ear ; I disliked everyone, people were only making game of me. How bad-tempered I was in those days ! I'm afraid I'm not very much better now, but I know everyone will agree with me that to be laughed at under some circumstances makes one very bitter, for instance when you imagine everything in life to be serious, and are suddenly awakened to the fact that what you think serious is only a subject for mirth to others. I rushed to my mother's room eager to pour out my troubles to her, but I didn't find her alone ; a clergyman was with her, one of the curates of St. Gile's. He had come for Christmas donations for the poor.

"Here's Annie ; she has lots of money to give away ; ask her," said my mother.

I had forgotten all about my money ; I only remembered I had been laughed at and my pride was wounded. I told them both of my trouble, but they laughed at me, too. This was beyond human endurance. I sat on the floor and screamed, stamping my feet and calling out as loudly as I could, "You're all horrid ; I hate you !" What passion to give way to ; and instead of kind words from my mother and the Rev. Mr. S—— I should have received smacks.

"Come, little girl," said Mr. S——, "when the storm's over we'll talk business. Your mother tells me you have a whole sovereign, and you wish to spend it on poor little girls and boys. Would you like to come out with me now—at least, when your eyes have quite dried—and see some of them in their homes, and tell me then who are to be the proud possessors of those little shining sixpences ?"

Indeed I would. How grand I should be ! Fancy going out with such a big man, visiting the poor, and giving them money. I was quite happy again ; sunshine had broken through the clouds ; eyes were very quickly dried, and, with my hand in his, I went out into the wide world to distribute my new silver sixpences.

After all, everything had happened for the best, for if Miss M— hadn't laughed at me, I should perhaps have spent all the money in toys, and have had none left to go into Drury Lane with.

I didn't like some of the streets at all, they looked so dirty, and I had my very best dress on. I'm afraid children are very vain, for I'm reminded of having said as I passed a poor little girl who was only covered with rags : " Her dress was never as pretty as mine is, was it, Mr. S— ? " Mr. S— replied by saying, and very truly : " Her state is different to yours, dear child, but her feelings are the same ; she has never had a pretty dress, perhaps, but she would very much like to have one." I'm told I offered her the sovereign to buy one, but Mr. S— told me to wait until I had seen some other little children in the next street—the children he had brought me to visit—and so we trudged on, leaving the little waif looking after us. Where the Dials meet we halted and turned into one of the gloomy houses, the door of which was standing wide open. Children were screaming, men and women quarrelling, but as soon as they saw us their demeanour completely changed, the children looked shame-faced, the men and women slunk away. " Is your mother in ? " said Mr. S— to one of the " cherubs." " Yes, yer honour ; she's at the tub." By this he meant she was washing clothes ; and there he found her. She looked quite respectable compared with the other people I had seen. She had a very ragged frock on, but her face was clean, and she knew how to curtsy.

" I've brought a little lady to see the children, Mrs. T— ; where are they all ? "

" Out playing in the street, sir ; I'll call them."

I remember, as if it were only yesterday, her calling those five children in from the gutter. And what poor little objects they were. As soon as I saw them I wanted to open the bag and give them all the sixpences, but Mr. S— restrained me from doing so.

" Ask them what they want more than anything in the world, Annie, and hear what they say."

I was a little queen enstalled amongst them. A chair was placed for me—at least the frame-work of one—and I sat down upon it in the centre of the room with the children round me, eager to give them all I had.

I couldn't speak, but sat looking at them, feeling dreadfully frightened. At last Mr. S— began the cross-questioning. We've both almost forgotten all their wants. I remember only the last request made—the *raison d'être* of this story—but I believe one half-starved child wanted a pork pie and some sherbet—a very horrid mixture—another wanted oranges, and so on. At last the eldest girl was questioned.

“What would you like to have, Emily?” said Mr. S—.

“Oh, sir, if I could only have a new pair of boots, and a hat with a feather in it, I could go into pantomime, cos Mary Ann Coles, as lives in Betterton Street, says as how she can get me a fairy's part.”

What a fascination this answer had for me. Pantomime, of all things! How lovely! fancy only to have a new pair of boots, and a hat with a feather in it to be a fairy!

“Oh, you must be a fairy!” I cried out; “please take as much money as you want.”

I forgot all about the other children's wants, I only thought of Emily's. She wanted to be a fairy in a pantomime. I was pouring the whole of the contents of the bag into her torn apron, when Mr. S— stopped me by saying:—

“Annie, you shall buy the boots and hat for Emily to-morrow if you wish to, and send them her. They won't cost the whole of the sovereign, so you can buy the other things as well, and still have some sixpences left for other little boys and girls.”

But I didn't want to see any 'other little boys and girls, I only wanted to buy Emily's hat and boots. I couldn't possibly wait till the next day, I must get home to mother, and ask her to buy them.

Before six o'clock that evening the hat and boots were at No. 5, Silver Street, Drury Lane; and no two little people in the whole world were happier than Emily and I the day she came to me and told me she had “got the fairy's part at the ‘Garden.’” I loved the stage then, when pantomime was the dream of my life; I love the stage now, when Juliets and Portias are the dream of my life.

How impatiently I waited for that pantomime to be produced—it was “Jack the Giant Killer” I believe—and how excited I was until the fairies entered; but I couldn't find Emily amongst the crowd—evidently being a fairy changed her appearance.

That memorable night was the second I had spent in a theatre, but how I loved being there. It was a stage with people on it, and they all looked beautiful; but when I spent the greater part of my first sovereign in helping little Emily to go into pantomime, I little dreamed that several years later I should be as grateful to someone

for helping me to procure my first London engagement as little Emily was ; but it wasn't a hat with a feather in it I wanted, nor yet a pair of boots, but an introduction to a London manager. This, Miss Featherstone—to whom I have taken the liberty of dedicating this trifle—did for me, although a stranger to her. That engagement was the stepping-stone to my later efforts, humble as they have been, and I was as happy that day, when I knew I was to act at the Globe theatre, as Emily was years before, when she was to be “a fairy at the ‘Garden.’ ”

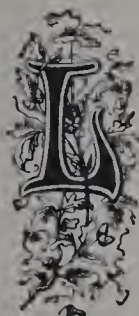


The Children of the Poor,

AS RECITED BY

MISS ALMA MURRAY.

(Translated from the French of Victor Hugo by Alfred Forman.)



LEAVE not the little child forlorn ;
God's greatnesses within him lie ;
Our babes, before they here were born,
Were gleams and perfumes in the sky.
God yields them to us for a while ;
They come ; His crowning gift is this.
He puts his wisdom in their smile,
He lays his pardon in their kiss.

Their sweetness on us pours its deeps ;
Their right is happiness untold.
If they but hunger, Heaven weeps ;
And shivers if they are but cold.

When Innocence is met with dower
Of woe, a guilt upon us lies ;
Man holds the angel in his power,
And, oh ! what thunder in the skies

When God demands the helpless things,
Whom here amid our sloth and sin
He sent with garb of shining wings,
And sees the rags we keep them in !

A True Woman.

BY CECIL HOWARD.



IN a cosily furnished study in a flat situated in a good neighbourhood, two men were smoking—gentlemen in the best sense of the word. The one, Henry Copeland, was home on leave from India ; the other, Charles Fordyce, his host, was one of those fortunate men, with a good income, who well born and well educated, could afford to gratify his artistic tastes without being compelled to sacrifice his work for the absolute necessities of life. They had not met for some years, and, as is often the case, their correspondence had nearly ceased ; but one of the first visits that Copeland had paid on his return to England was to his former chum. As he sat puffing at his cheroot, his gaze wandered round the room, the walls of which were hung with theatrical celebrities, not the “pets of the ballet,” or ladies famous in burlesque, but the kings and queens of their profession. Over the mantel, in the place of honour, was one picture that riveted his attention ; it was that of a lovely woman. From the canvas shone true, honest eyes, and the only fault that could be found in an almost perfect face was that the curl of the mouth denoted pride.

“I see,” said Copeland, “that you have still your old love for the drama ; but whose is the queenly face that looks down upon us ? it should be that of a good woman, though a little too haughty to quite please me.”

“I am sorry that the picture does not altogether meet with your approval, for it is the likeness of one of the noblest women that earth has known, and, as her history is interwoven with my life, let me tell it you ; it may interest you.

“Years ago, as you know, for we often went together, I never missed a ‘first night,’ even at the minor theatres. At one of these in the north of London I was much struck with a young actress, whose appearance and style were superior to her surroundings. I obtained an introduction to Miss Grace Desmond, a stage name of course, and soon found her to be as good as she was beautiful. She had no parents and but one near relative, a brother, of whom she only spoke as being abroad. I learned to love her, and made her my wife.”

“Good heavens !” ejaculated Copeland.

“I was not then nearly as well to-do as I am now, but I took her off the stage at once ; and we were perfectly happy until I noticed that something was worrying my wife. She had lost her light-heartedness, and what was more—though I could allow her a modest sum for her dress and housekeeping, neither the one nor the other were on as liberal a scale as I thought they should have been—Grace, as I will still call her, asked me to let her take an engagement again, and my refusal seemed to make her more melancholy. I at first set it down to that longing for the footlights which almost invariably asserts itself in those who have once acted, and tried to reason with her against her wishes, but she urged her desire the more strongly, and, as I would not give in, a cloud arose between us. I soon noticed that Grace was a good deal absent from home, and that when questioned, beyond saying she had been out walking or looking at the shops, a woman’s favourite occupation, it seems, I could learn little of where she had been. I am not a very jealous man, but I began to get uneasy, and I daresay this made me fretful and captious ; but Grace was as affectionate to me as wife could be, her love appeared as true, but there was constantly an enquiring look in her eyes when she looked into mine as though she were trying to solve some problem, and occasionally a look of almost horror would mar her beautiful face. Those were miserable days, but worse were to come. I returned home one afternoon. Grace was out and did not come in till nearly eight in the evening. I was annoyed, and not only showed it but hinted meaningly that there must be some unworthy attraction that could so constantly take a wife from a husband’s side. At first Grace did not appear to understand my meaning, then as the truth of what I implied flashed upon her, the blood rushed to her face, her usually gentle expression changed, and she stood before me a proud, indignant woman.

“And this is your faith in me,” she said, “in me, whose whole being has lived but in your love, who have but one belief on earth—in you, and you alone. The moment I have dreaded has come at last. I wished but to spare *you* pain, and myself the shame of telling you how the only tie I have in this world besides yourself will shortly be broken. The brother I told you of was not abroad, to my sorrow be it spoken, but it is the only deceit I have practiced on you. He is a felon, he is being hunted down for forgery ; unless he be taken soon, he will not trouble the law, for worn out by dissipation and the fear of capture, he lies at death’s door, in the house of the one friend he has in this great London. It is to visit him that I have left your home ; it was to help him in his sore need that I have filched from you the money you

have given me. To-day I saw him—God forgive me for saying so—I pray, for the last time alive, for he is repentant. I should have told you all this sooner, but I feared that the knowledge would make you look upon me with contempt, or, even worse to me, with pity, and neither could I have borne ; and so I was silent, and I have my punishment, for now I see that my concealment of the truth has shaken your confidence in me, and that you think me no better than some of those from among whom you took me. You, harbouring such thoughts of me, can never trust me wholly in the future, and I, loving you as I do, could not nestle to your heart, and feel certain it was all my own.”

I don't know what devil possessed me, but I did not believe her story ; I even taunted her with the remark of what a splendid tragic actress she would have made, and told her to go to the brother she loved so dearly. She took me at my word. With a cry that almost made me take her to my arms again, she rushed from the room. The banging of the outer door roused me, and I hurried into the street. The night was foggy, I could hardly see the lamps on the opposite side of the road ; no wonder I could see nothing of her. I hesitated and thought “ only a woman's passion—she'll come back ; ” and so there I stood, irresolute, not daring to enter the house again lest she should return and I not be on the threshold to receive her. An hour, an eternity it seemed to me, passed ; I seized my hat and started for the police station with the view of tracking her down ; but then if her tale were true, what would become of her brother, should they find her ? and so I crept back to the lonely room, and there I sat and wondered and thought of the old happy days, and how she had made my life so bright. I cursed myself and my own folly in not believing in her, and then the damning suspicions would arise again till I was nearly mad. The morning found me resolved ; I would learn the truth at any cost. I left a letter for my wife, praying her forgiveness. I went cautiously to work, I employed no detective myself, but did it through my lawyers. The man was only to find her, and to leave the rest to me. I wandered through the streets for days, hoping that chance, which so often helps us, might help me ; that I might catch a glimpse of her myself, and then I felt I knew I could bring her back. But days passed, and the strain was too great upon me, and I became reckless. I drank, I gambled, I speculated, did anything that would drown thought. Well, a few months saw the end of it all. I had run through everything I possessed. I was a broken man ; friends tired of endeavouring to wean me from my follies, as they called them, looked askance on me, though you know me too well to think that

I ever sank so low as to borrow from them. I was nearly at starvation point in one small room, when Nature avenged herself for the life I had been leading, and I lay in my wretched garret, without a friend to give me so much as a cup of water. From all that I knew, I had kept my lodging a secret as I thought, and wearied and worn out, and with nothing to live for, I felt I could welcome death. I became worse, and delirium set in ; for days I lay unconscious, and then, when memory returned, and I could remember and understand my surroundings, I wondered where I was. There was no want of comfort in the room, instead of the bare appearance it had formerly presented. A professional nurse was at my bedside, and presently one whom I knew as one of the first physicians visited me, and tried to cheer me with the news that, if all went well, I was in a fair way for recovery. As I got stronger, I asked what it all meant, but I was told only to get strong, and then I should know all. In answer to questions as to whether anything had been heard of my wife, I could only learn that she was well. I implored them to bring her to me, and again I was told that I must have gained strength before an interview would be allowed. I insisted, weak as I was ; I threatened to get up—I would find her—and then I suppose I fainted. I thought I heard a stifled cry as my senses left me. When they returned, my head was resting in the arms of the woman I had so cruelly doubted. I could only whisper “Am I forgiven ?” and the one dear kiss she gave me sealed my pardon. I had a relapse, and it was many days before I was allowed to learn the whole truth. Grace, for I will still call her so for the present, had gone to her brother’s, to find he had died almost immediately after she had left him the evening before. The shock combined with her own troubles struck her down. She was taken to the hospital, and hovered between life and death. On her recovery, a lady visitor sent her to the seaside. She had written to me as soon as she was able, but from my having sold off everything and left the house in which we had lived, her letters never reached me. She read my silence in the light of my desertion of her. Having no other means of living, she returned to the stage, changing her name. Here good fortune came to her. She read in the newspaper that if “Evelyn Cholmondeley” (my wife’s real name) “will apply to certain solicitors, she will hear of something to her advantage.” She went in the hope that the advertisement might have been inserted by me, but it was to tell her that she was entitled to £3,000. Almost at the same time she learnt from one of the stage carpenters, who had been employed at the theatre from which I took her to make her my wife, that he had seen me, looking poor and wretchedly ill, entering

the house in which I had my garret. She had in vain been seeking tidings of me ; now if the intelligence were only true, she would be able to prove how I had misjudged her, and we should be happy again. She found me, unable to recognise her, but she was almost happy, for I could not prevent her succouring me. Her money was only of value to her in that it enabled her to procure the best physicians, and all that a sick man needs. As little by little I learned all this, you may believe the self-contempt I felt. How was I ever to repay her, I—a friendless man, unable perhaps to work again, or at least for many a long day. To all my self-reproaches I had but one answer from her—“What I have is yours, and till you can work, I must work for both.” But Providence treated me better than I deserved. All my relations are rich ; one of them died and left me a considerable sum. I think Evelyn was almost sorry, but I rejoiced, for it enabled me to give her that position in society which the woman I so honour and love should hold.

“And so, old fellow,” said Fordyce, “when you hear actresses so badly spoken of, as being so vain, and heartless, and selfish, think of what I have told you, and, believe me, that there are to be found on the stage, from the humble ballet-girl to the leading lady, some hearts as pure, and natures as noble, as there are in all the world.”

Just then the door opened a little, and a very sweet voice asked—
“May I come in ?”

The original of the picture stood before them, a beautiful, gracious lady. The fond and trusting look that passed between husband and wife told a tale of perfect happiness.

“Evelyn, let me introduce my old chum, Harry Copeland.”

“Mrs. Fordyce, you have evidently made Charlie’s married life so blissful, that I must ask him to choose me a wife. I shall want one to take back to India with me.”

“Ah !” said Fordyce, as he put his arm fondly round her waist, “I shall never be able to find for you such a treasure as I have here.”



My Holiday.

BY F. BERNARD-BEERE.



DEAR MR. EDITOR,—

You ask me to give you some details of my Norwegian trip. I don't intend boring you with elaborate descriptions of the country, the habits, and customs of the natives, etc., as all that you can read about in Baedeker described in a much better manner than I could ever attempt, but I shall just tell you in a rambling unmethodical way anything that comes to me.

My visit to the Norwegian Fjords was due mainly to my delicate state of health, and partly from my intense love for visiting new places. For some time I wavered between a warm southern climate and Norway, for although I don't consider myself a bad sailor, still I believe there are many better, and it requires a little courage, even for the *very* best, to contemplate two-and-a-half days in the North Sea; but in the end my doctor prevailed, all my croakings about rough seas and cold weather were talked down, and the benefits of sea air, early hours, and *no* excitement, put forth so strongly, that Norway carried the day. I got interested reading up in every guide-book I could beg, borrow, or steal, the accounts of the places marked on the route I had chosen. My cabin was taken two or three weeks before starting. I then induced a friend to go with me, and when the time came we both started off very cheerfully to meet the yacht at Tilbury. The first people I sighted were friends, of course, and naturally the last people in the world I should have expected to see, but *they* evidently weren't. at all surprised to find themselves there, for they were surrounded by sufficient luggage to suggest emigration for life. When I found myself eventually on the yacht I was delighted with everything around me. In this case the realisation was far greater than the anticipation. My cabin was larger and better than I had imagined, and everything was done to make me comfortable. Indeed, the whole time the attendance was excellent. I soon discovered that the cabin facing mine was empty, so took the results on my own head, and converted it into a dressing-room. It proved a great

boon, for I was then able to keep my cabin tidy. Some of the passengers had theirs fitted up charmingly; one in particular taking my fancy, the hangings of soft yellow, with one or two artistic brackets supporting old-fashioned brown and blue jugs filled with yellow flowers and grasses. I asked the stewardess to whom it belonged, and she informed me with a very impressive manner, "Mrs S.—; this is her eleventh voyage." The idea of any woman having the courage to brave the North Sea eleven times cheered me greatly, for I thought the sea couldn't be so bad after all. I again ventured, "Who is Mrs. S.—?" This lamentable ignorance on my part really quite shocked the stewardess, who could only answer in her wonderment, "Why—er—Mrs. S.—" For two days I kept in my cabin, and made my first appearance on deck at the first place at which we dropped anchor, Odde, a quaint little red-roofed town, crumpled between two mountains stretching away on either side of the smooth glassy Fjord, reminding me of Loch Awe; indeed, the Norwegian scenery generally reminded me of Scotland, though in some parts it was less rugged. I spent my first morning lying on my deck chair, shaded from the brilliant, scorching sun by a gorgeously-tinted Japanese umbrella. When I had quite finished admiring the beauties of the landscape, I turned my attention to the beauty of the passengers, and amused myself by trying to tack the right name to the right person, or *vice-versâ*, with the aid of a printed list which had been presented to everyone on their arrival. I made out several doctors, a clergyman, who was the funniest man on board, and before long the inevitable family of amateur photographers, who were always exceedingly busy. I noticed that whenever something particularly fine was sighted and my attention called to it, the apparatus was always on duty and well to the fore, shutting out the best point of the view. Last year whilst staying at Oban, I saw on a steamer going to Ballachulish a very stout lady clad in manly tweeds, strong boots, hard felt hat, stick, and the biggest pair of field glasses ever seen slung on her back, accompanied by a delicate-looking little man in an ulster, of an appalling cheque pattern, staggering under the weight of a photographing machine. The lady was the photographer, but her efforts evidently didn't please, for I heard her moaning in a voice suitable to tweeds, that *she* didn't know how it was, but she 'couldn't develop a cow!'

After a quiet Sunday in Odde Fjord, we awoke next morning facing busy Bergen. Shops immediately became the attraction, and every half hour boats left the yacht laden for the shore. My friend and I were content to leave at the comfortable hour of twelve,

paying Brandt's, the fur store, our first visit, where I'm afraid I wasn't proof against buying more fur than was consistent with economy. One of my purchases was a large carriage rug made entirely of the soft downy feathers from the breast of the eider duck, a bird so small that I'm afraid many hundreds must have been sacrificed to make my lovely covering.

From there we went to Hammer's, the silversmith, who certainly has some of the loveliest things I have ever seen. Some antique silver drinking cups looked very enticing, but their price soon cooled my ardour, and I was very well satisfied with two *entr  e* dishes, and several curiously twisted spoons. We lunched, with a party from the yacht, at the important hotel of Bergen, an odd-looking, white-shuttered place. I cannot say much for the building, but the cooking was excellent. On our return to the yacht we found the doctor very busy with a little note book getting up a concert for the evening. A song and recitation were entered against my name. Two gentlemen produced music portfolios, two ladies offered to do their best, and an unhappy accompanist was unearthed. To be truthful I must own the 'crew' proved the strength of the programme. One of the officers blushingly acknowledged a weakness for the banjo, another for reading Tennyson; the *chef* and an assistant proved excellent whistling duettists; but the laurel wreath was placed on the head of the bo'sun (metaphorically, of course) for his clever delivery of the "Waterloo" stanzas from *Childe Harold*.

I found a chance next morning of complimenting him on his success and his admirable choice of a poem, and with an air of one wearied with praise, he admitted that 'it was quite the best thing Byron ever wrote, and the best thing he recited.' I didn't think that was bad for the bo'sun. The concert, held in the ladies' boudoir, went very well. Of the two poems I recited, the morbid one found most favour. The sailors all had a melancholy turn—I don't think I once saw them cheerful, but always comfortably depressed. It was quite a 'Pinafore' crew, and a very interesting study to me. One sailor, a tall, fair-haired, good-looking fellow of the Bret Harte order, was exceedingly *blas  * and world-worn about the expression—he spoke excellent English, and a little of nearly every other language, played the piano, and was given to sighing and mystery. I fancy he rather liked to be caught leaning against the yacht's side gazing out to sea, "thinking unutterable thoughts." His comrades looked on him as "*quite* superior, seen better days, poor fellow," and in a pensive way he tolerated their deferential pity. One morning, whilst waiting for the launch to take me to the shore, he informed me he had been everywhere and seen everything, and mentioned as his old

friends some names that made me wonder. I asked an officer if these yarns were any way near the truth, and he said he believed so, but that Jack had brought everything on himself and was not to be pitied ; he was a real *poseur* and just a bit of a humbug. I'm afraid Jack's good looks and mysterious manner have taken in a good many kind-hearted, simple ladies, his sighs and 'misunderstood' life bringing him in a little income in *douceurs*. But I mustn't forget a personage quite as important as Jack, who called on us the afternoon of the concert. While listening to the rehearsal, a frantic shout from some enthusiasts drew us on deck, and there we saw a whale rolling from side to side, and throwing up high jets of water, behaving altogether as a whale with respect for himself should do. I was mentally measuring Jonah and his "host in need," etc., when the gentleman sank out of sight, leaving only the troubled water to indicate where he had been.

(To be continued.)



A Music-Hall Tennyson.

BY HENRY PETTITT.



Y attention, when passing the Royal Granada Music Hall one evening, was attracted by the following announcement :—

SPECIAL ATTRACTION !

JOHNNY DRYDEN ,

THE CELEBRATED IMPROVISATORE, THE TENNYSON
OF THE MUSIC HALLS, WILL APPEAR FOR THE
BENEFIT OF THE GREAT MACVANCE.

Although it was long before Mr. Pinero had expressed a fear that the dramatic literature of our variety theatres might be compounded of the "Wit of the Wash-Tub and the Pathos of the Pantry," and Mr. Henry Arthur Jones had taken up the cudgels for the music-halls in a manner greatly calculated to make their proprietors exclaim, "Heaven save us from our friends!"—yet

there had recently been some considerable discussion about the quality of the songs sung in these places of amusement; so being somewhat curious to see the new Tennyson, I inquired at the pay-box, and finding the gentleman's "turn" was just coming on, I went in.

I had not many minutes to wait before the celebrated improvisatore comic singer and poet made his appearance, and after singing a first song, which I did not think quite up to the Tennysonian mark, he advanced to the footlights and said:—

"I am now a-goin' to sing to you my celebrated Improvisatore song, in which I undertake to spell any word you like to give me, and make up an impromptu verse upon it."

The band then struck up, and he burst forth into song as follows:—

"I'll sing you an impromptu song, that you've not heard before,
And when you have, then I am sure you'll want to hear some more.
I'll give you rhymes upon the times, and everyone shall see,
How I can spell you any word for my new spelling bee."

Here the music stopped, and the "poet" asked for a word. Seated near me were half-a-dozen young gentlemen of the medical student type, one of whom with a stentorian voice shouted "Gladiolus!"

"Thank you," said the new Tennyson—

"GLADSTONE."

"G-l-a-d you know spells glad, s-t-o-n-e spells stone;
He is a great o-r-a-t-o-r, as I am sure you all will own;
He's steered the good ship England through many a troubled sea,
He's a honour and a glory to Britannia's spelling bee."

Here there were several expressions of dissent. Music-hall audiences are for some mysterious reason always very conservative.

"Another word if you please."

"Parallelogram."

"Thank you," said the poet. '*Parliament*'; and away he rushed with,

"P-a-r"—

"No, no," shouted the student. "Not '*Parliament*'; any child can spell that. '*Parallelogram*'; and if you don't like that try '*Parallelopipedon*.'"

"The word '*Parliament*' was given me by a lady, sir, and I always oblige the ladies first;" and then he blossomed out into verse again.

"PARLIAMENT."

"P-a-r par, l-i-a-m-e-n-t, Parliament :

A place where many d-u-f, duff-e-r-s duffers are sent.

The man who interrupts my song in that place ought to be,
Instead of kicking up a row in this here spelling bee."

A roar of laughter and applause greeted this repartee, and with a triumphant look at the group of medical students, the bard asked for another word. A few were shouted in a doubtful manner by some of the audience, but loud above them all was heard from the still unbeaten young gentleman—

"Protoplasm."

The singer, however, turned a deaf ear to him, and was just starting off at a rattling pace with 'Marriage,' when his tormentor rose from his seat, and rapping on the table with his stick, said in a voice that was heard throughout the hall: "You asserted that you could spell any word. I have given you several, and you have not spelt one. I challenge you to sing a verse on 'Protoplasm.'"

"And I refuse," replied the Improvisatore.

"And why?"

"Because it is not a fit subject to sing about before ladies."

This retort was received with cheers, and followed by shouts of "Turn him out!" etc., but above the din loud and clear was heard the voice—

"Then if you will not make up a comic verse about 'Protoplasm' and tell the audience what it means, I will give you another word, and I publicly challenge you to make an impromptu verse upon it. If you succeed I will admit you are an Improvisatore; if you try to wriggle out of it, or fail, I shall denounce you as an impostor. The word is 'Apotheosis.'"

The silence of the tomb fell upon that hall as the new Tennyson girded up his loins and prepared for the battle, looked at his implacable enemy for a moment, and then slipped down to the foot-lights.

"Ladies and gentlemen, I appeal to you. That man there—I can't call him a gentleman—with his pals, while I am a-tryin' to do my business to the best of my abilty and amuse you, keeps on interrupting me."

"Apotheosis! will you spell it and sing it?" shouted his tormentor.

"No," answered the Tennyson of the music-hall. I decline! So long as I sing in a respectable music-hall, *I will not make up verses on scriptural subjects.*"

A storm of applause followed this noble sentiment, which

increased as the chucker-out advanced towards the medical students and I departed, reflecting on my way home that, hard as I have sometimes thought my lot to be; even for a brougham and three turns a night, I would not be an Improvisatore.



The Merrow's Rock.

BY GENIE (ROSE) NORREYS.



HERE is a great jagged rock, and it stands on the wildest part of the western coast of Ireland; it towers above all the other rocks and is quite impassable, except on one side; its cave is supposed to contain many treasures, but no boat can live in the breakers, for even when the day is calm and smiling, the waves dash and foam along the shore, often bearing on their white crests a broken spar from some wreck, which they fling on to the strand as though to say 'See what we can do!'

The tide was going out. Two girls with some difficulty had reached the rock. They climbed up a little way to a crag and looked down at the waves, that now and again leaped fiercely and furtively up, covering them with spray.

"What is that sound, Mary?" said one of the girls. "How sad it is, it's like a moan of pain."

"It is only the breakers in the cave; but the peasants believe that it is the spirit of a girl who mourns because she failed to release her father's soul. There is an old legend which is a source of great superstition and terror to the fisher-folk. It is that this rock belongs

to the Merrow, a terrible creature, half fish, half man ; his body is covered with green scales, his arms are short and like fins, his teeth long and green, his hair the colour of the sea, and under his arm he carries a cocked hat, which he puts on when he dives from this rock down to his house at the bottom of the ocean.

That ruin on the cliff there was once a cottage, in which lived a fisherman. This fisherman got very friendly with the Merrow, who took him down to his house one day. While looking at the curiosities the fisherman's attention was attracted by some curious narrow pots ; he asked the Merrow what they were, and was told they were soul cages.

‘What souls?’ gasped the fisherman.

‘The souls of the drowned. I catch them just as they are leaving their bodies,’ said the Merrow unconcernedly—for as he had no soul to save, he knew not what he did.

The fisherman was a good catholic, and it distressed him much to think of all those poor caged souls, and he determined to release them from their cold narrow limits. So he invited the Merrow to dinner and succeeded in making him so drunk that he fell asleep ; and then the fisherman borrowed his hat, dived down, and opened all the cages. He saw nothing, but he heard a swift sound like the rushing of the wind and he knew the souls were speeding away.

About a hundred years ago, the last descendant of the fisherman lived most happily in that lonely cottage with his beautiful young wife. But, a little while before their baby was born, the fisherman was drowned one night while fishing along the coast. His poor wife was half crazed with grief, and her baby brought her no joy. She refused all offers of help, and lived alone with her child, earning her living by making fishing nets. The days wore away their dreary length, and, as she worked, her gaze would travel out to the sea ; and then the little child would creep unheeded to her knee, and look wistfully up into her mother's face, wondering, wondering what she saw there. When she was old enough, she questioned her mother—and then the overburthened heart gave vent to all its grief and terror. The child put her tender young arms around the quivering form, and laid her soft face against the faded cheek, rubbing the tears away with her gentle little palm and saying :

‘Mother, I will now wait and watch for the Merrow. I will take his hat, and go down and release my dear father's soul, and when I run home to tell you, will you look gladly at me then ? I will tell the Merrow that I want his hat to play with, and he will believe me because I am a little girl, and God will forgive me.’

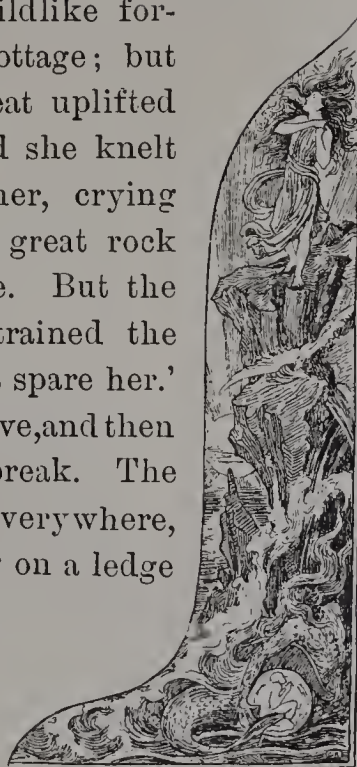
Ever after the child watched without tiring ; but once when the sun was shining very bright, the child, childlike forgetting, ran gaily along the path to the cottage ; but when she saw her mother rise with a great uplifted joy in her face the child remembered, and she knelt down and asked her mother to forgive her, crying out that she would go to the top of the great rock and wait, wait, wait for the Merrow there. But the mother's fears and love awoke, and she strained the little one to her heart, saying ' she could not spare her.'

The years passed on until the child was twelve, and then the mother died. Hearts take so long to break. The child disappeared. They searched for her everywhere, and, after many days, they found her lying on a ledge of the rock, high above the waters—dead."

The two girls rose to go.

" Oh ! Mary, it's only a legend ? "

A moan swept round the rock.



John or James.

BY J. L. SHINE.



AS cheery an old fellow as I ever knew was John Sandford, now, alas ! gone over to the majority. He had been a mummer for a few years, but when he and his brother James came into some property, they both determined to rest on what laurels they had won, and to enjoy their *otium cum dignitate* for the remainder of their days. As a youngster I was a favourite of John Sandford's. I recited little ' bits,' and was fond of Shakespeare and the theatre, and so I suppose won his heart. He used often to tell me some of his reminiscences as he sat and smoked, and one of these he always chuckled over. It appears that he and his brother were something alike in feature, though John had a jovial merry face and was rather stoutly built. James, on the other hand, was more refined

in appearance, and had an almost solemn look—and so James used to play Hamlet, and John the First Gravedigger. Well, they had been performing in a country town to but a scanty audience, prominent among whom was the chief linendraper of the place, a man of worth among his fellows, one who never missed a performance of the legitimate drama, and had a great admiration, almost reverence, for a tragedian—indeed he used invariably to ask the great man of the company to dinner on the Sunday, and as his table was known to be a bountiful one, the invitation in those days of scanty earnings was eagerly looked for. But I must add, that on anything like low comedy the linendraper looked down with something like contempt. Imagine then John Sandford's surprise when he found at the close of the Saturday evening's performance, a precisely-worded little note from the linendraper, whom I will call Tompkins, begging "the honour of his company to dinner" at three o'clock the next day. Certainly it was only addressed to J. Sandford, but my friend John, only too glad of the chance, did not stop to inquire too minutely as to whether it was intended for him. So, toggled out in his best, and that none too brilliant, the low comedian repaired to "The Laurels" at the appointed time. He was shown into a very comfortable room, and his host came forward to greet him, but seemed greatly astonished at his appearance. However, though there was a puzzled look on his face, he introduced his guest to Mrs. Tompkins and his two nice-looking daughters; and the conversation soon turned on the previous night's performance. John was highly complimented by Mr. Tompkins on "his admirable acting." Actors are never backward in accepting praise, and so Master Sandford rather plumed himself on the impression he had made; and then the old gentleman proceeded to descant upon the wonders of the illusions of the stage.

"For instance," he said, "I should have taken you for a much slighter man, and, pardon my saying so, I should have thought you would have worn a melancholy look instead of the laughing one that appears natural to you"—(for John had a merry twinkle in his eye, and but little of the tragic fire in his expression).

The comedian began to 'smell a rat,' and to guess that it was his brother who should have been in his place; but he couldn't afford to lose a good dinner, perhaps, by explaining away the mistake at once, and so he accounted for the difference in appearance by descanting on the value of 'make-up,' dress, &c. They went in to dinner, and an uncommonly good one John made, but though he played a splendid knife and fork he found time to keep Mrs. Tompkins constantly laughing at his comical stories, and to pay a great deal of attention

to his neighbour, Miss Alice. Old Tompkins could not make it out ; that a man who played Hamlet should descend to making puns, tell funny anecdotes, and revel in the practical jokes he had inflicted was beyond his comprehension ; but he was most hospitable, passed the bottle quickly, and was generally agreeable. Yet he was evidently puzzled and a little disappointed. By-and-by they went into the drawing-room, and there our friend, the linendraper, begged of his guest to give them a treat—would he recite to them ? Oh, with pleasure ; what should it be ? Anything that he pleased so long as it was something from the “immortal bard.” By this time John had made up his mind. He thought he would really impersonate his brother for a time, and as he was, as he told me, no mean actor, he gave the speeches “To be or not to be,” “Hamlet’s advice to the players,” and “Alas ! poor Yorick.”

Tompkins *père* was delighted. “But what a strange difference,” said he, “there is between a recital on the stage and in a room. Why the *voice* seems quite different, though the delivery is the same” —for John had caught the “trick” of his brother’s “mouthing.”

Was he tired ? Would he be kind enough to continue to amuse them ?

Then John thought he would give them a spice of his own quality, and so he gave the Gravedigger scene, and from that launched forth into his own special line—gave them bits from old farces, touches of his best low comedy, until he fairly convulsed his audience with laughter.

“Why, my dear sir,” said old Tompkins, “you are a genius. How truly you carry out the great Shakespeare’s words that ‘one man in his time plays many parts.’ You will be great, sir ; the name of James Sandford shall yet rival that of Garrick.”

“Pardon me,” said my friend, “but my name is John, not James.”

“John !” cried old Tompkins ; “why I thought—yes, here is the bill (drawing it from his pocket)—that it was James who played Hamlet last night ?”

“And so it was.”

“Then how is it I find *you* here, sir,” asked the host, just a little angry.

“Well, sir, I must make my apologies in the best way I can. I had heard so much of your kindness and hospitality that, when the opportunity offered of availing myself of it, I was only too flattered at your invitation, which, you will remember, was addressed to J. Sandford, not to James or John——”

“Here Mrs. Tompkins and her daughters joined in—I don’t think Miss Alice’s entreaties were the least fervent—they had been so

delighted and amused, and the mistake was so natural, &c., &c., that old Tompkins cooled down—his rage had not been at a very white heat—and he said :

“Well, I must have your brother, too, so I’ll send for him, and he must join us at supper.”

And he did ; and he made himself so agreeable to the more romantic Amelia Tompkins that the good-bye on the part of both the girls to both the actors was coupled with the hope that, when they came to the town again, they would call, though this must have been said unknown to their father, who had not *quite* got over John’s deception. They did manage to call again, and that not so very long after, and, as they were then no longer poor strolling players, after a little explanation they were well received ; and when old Tomkins died, he left his daughters a very nice little sum, by which the brothers profited ; for when John finished this story of his early life, he used to point with his ‘churchwarden’ to a kind old lady sitting on the opposite side of the hearth, and say “That’s Alice, you know.”



The Bold Buccaneer.

(From "Songs of Sentiment, modelled on the style and choice of the modern drawing-room ballader—
with appropriate illustrations.")

I.



'M a bold buccaneer, and my name's Red Bob ;
I takes on Pirate work by the job,
And a long jack-knife lies hid in my fob—

Thunder and blood !

I munch black puddens as is of gore ;
I cry ho ! ho ! to the tempest's roar ;
All catalogued crimes are mine, and more—

Thunder and blood !

I see some doubting your looks confess ;
My friends, though here in this gala dress,
I'm (take my word for it) nevertheless
(*meekly*) (Thunder and Blood !)

A furious rover, what time this shirt
Is changed for a cloak, and knives that hurt,
And a brewer's cap, and a six-inch skirt—

Thunder and blood !



Ho ! ho ! then, lads, for the lopped-off head,
And the scuppers running with slippery red,
And the fired ships, and the heaped up dead—

Thunder and blood !

Ho ! ho ! for him who walks the plank,
With a ten-pound ball on his spindle shank,
And the fun of it all—for which I thank

Thunder and blood !



I'm a bold buccaneer of the cross-bone breed,
And the rakish craft—I am indeed,
Though now I may seem just 'off my feed'

Of thunder and blood—

But—there, you may all mean well, no doubt,
But your dubious visages put me out ;
No man so placed can continue to shout

Thunder and blood !

The Drama in Australia.

BY AUSTIN BRERETON.



MISS NELLIE STEWART.

THE Australians are a great amusement-loving people. In no other cities in the world are there, comparatively, so many well-attended theatres and other places of entertainment as are to be found in Melbourne and in Sydney; and in no other country, I venture to assert, are the wants of the playgoer provided for so liberally as in the sunny South. The theatre is the chief attraction, for the music-hall is an almost unknown quantity here, and although high-class music flourishes, it has not the permanency of the theatre. Little or nothing is known in London of this part of colonial life, so that the stranger in this land, accustomed as he may be to the acting and mounting of plays in the mother country, cannot help a feeling of astonishment on becoming acquainted with the Australian theatres, the admirable acting therein, and the extreme beauty and

completeness with which every piece is staged. First of all, a word as to the theatres of Melbourne and Sydney. The former city, with a population of three-hundred-and-eighty-thousand, has two first-class theatres, the Princess Theatre and the Theatre Royal. Until recently, it had a third first-class house, the Bijou, which was destroyed by fire last Easter. It is, however, being rebuilt, and the new building will be opened in February next. Melbourne has also two "popular" theatres, the Alexandra, a vast building, and the Opera House. These five theatres are constantly open, and they invariably do such good business as would make an English theatrical manager open his eyes very wide indeed. Sydney, whose inhabitants number three-hundred-and-fifty-odd-thousand, has, likewise, three high-class theatres, the Theatre Royal, Her Majesty's, and the Criterion. In addition, it has the Opera House, an ill-conditioned, out-of-the-way place, the Gaiety, a dusty little house, and the Standard. The latter is small and pretty, but, like the Gaiety, it is not frequented by the best order of people. Melbourne and Sydney, it will thus be seen, are each provided with three first-class theatres—counting the Bijou as one of them—as well as other theatres of secondary note. Brisbane, the population of which is seventy-three-thousand, has two first-class houses, the Opera House, a new and magnificent building, and the Gaiety. Adelaide, the residents of which number one-hundred-and-thirty-thousand, has a similar play-house, the Theatre Royal. It will be understood that I do not enumerate the various halls where musical, conjuring entertainments, and the like are held. I simply specify the regular theatres which are permanently open in each capital of Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia respectively.

Before proceeding further, it may be as well if the managers of these theatres, and their system of management, be stated, in order that my readers may clearly understand the subject. The Princess Theatre, and the Theatre Royal, Melbourne, the Theatre Royal, Sydney, the Opera House, Brisbane, and the Theatre Royal, Adelaide, are controlled by three partners, Mr. James C. Williamson, Mr. Arthur Garner, and Mr. George Musgrove. Through the number of theatres at their disposal, and the consequent magnitude of their operations, these gentlemen are enabled to engage more celebrated actors and actresses from abroad than is possible for their brother managers. So that, as I write, Mr. Charles Warner has just concluded a long and highly successful engagement with them, and is now touring on his own account in New Zealand. Miss Janet Achurch is acting at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, while Miss Jennie Lee has just arrived in Sydney in order to play "Jo" at the

Theatre Royal there. Mr. J. L. Toole, who may reckon upon a hearty welcome in Australia, and Mrs. Brown-Potter are under contract with "the firm" for next Easter. Melodrama, comic opera, and pantomime are the chief stock-in-trade, so to speak, of Messrs. Williamson, Garner, and Musgrove, but they do not confine themselves to these classes of work. The lessee of Her Majesty's, Sydney, of which more anon, is Mr. George Rignold, who produces Shakespeare and melodrama. Mr. Robert Brough and Mr. Dion Boucicault junr., managers of the Melbourne Bijou and Sydney Criterion, have the comedy field all to themselves.

All the theatres mentioned are eminently suited to their purpose, both from the stage point of view and in regard to the comfort of the audience. Two of the buildings, the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, and Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney, were perfect revelations to me. Even among the theatres of London, new and old, they are not surpassed. I have never been in a more beautiful or perfect theatre than the Princess. Indeed, I will make bold to say that, in respect to the graceful design of its interior and the comfort and cleanliness of its stage and dressing-rooms, it has no equal in London. The building, which is practically isolated, has spacious, luxurious entrances and every convenience for the public, while it is a perfect paradise for those concerned with the stage. At the back of the building is a door used by the working-staff, carpenters, stage-hands, supernumeraries, and the rest, who have their shops and offices on the same side of the house, opposite to the side where are the manager's offices and dressing-rooms. The stage-door proper is used only by the managers and the actors. But where is that stage-door? Up a back street, or stowed away in a dirty alley? Not so. It is in the main street, only a few yards from the dress-circle entrance, and, as you enter by it and pass along its carpeted passages and staircases, look at its dressing-rooms, each of which is a miniature drawing-room, you instinctively take off your hat as you would on entering a gentleman's house. The manager's rooms are small picture galleries, and everywhere there is an air of thoughtfulness, ease, cleanliness, and comfort that were foreign to me in the matter of theatres until I visited this one. The stage is wide, deep, and kept in lovely condition. The wide, marble staircase in front of the house, the sliding roof for use in summer, the airy balcony outside, the fountains, the flowers, and the ferns, did not please me so well as did the evident care which has sought to make the life of the actor at this theatre worth living. The theatre, above its ground floor, has only two tiers, the dress-circle and gallery. It was built on a good plan for not a little





MISS NELLIE FARREN AND MR. FRED LESLIE.

"I fancy I've seen that face before."

"Yes! that's the way I wear it."

RUY BLAS, Act i.

of its beauty is due to the sympathetic nature of the scenic art, of George Gordon, who helped in the designing of it. The other Australian theatre to which I would draw special attention is Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney. This is a new, handsome, and vast building. It is capable of holding an enormous number of people, and its stage is as large as that of Drury Lane. It has in addition to its dress-circle and gallery, a family circle, and to see it full of delighted people, as I saw it upon a recent occasion, is to imagine oneself at Drury Lane on Boxing Night. Other large theatres are the Royal, Melbourne, and the Royal, Sydney. Electric light is the common form of illumination, and programmes are absolutely free everywhere. The purchase of your seat is your first and last expense in connection with the theatre, although the cloak-room attendant is not above accepting a small recognition of his or her attention. But even that is quite a voluntary matter. And what is the price of that seat, it may be asked? The highest price of admission, be it stated, is the modest sum of five shillings, which entitles the purchaser to a reserved seat in the dress-circle, the fashionable part of the house. Excepting in the case of the Princess Theatre, where there are a few reserved stalls at five shillings, and on special occasions, such as a benefit, the ground floor is invariably occupied by unreserved seats at three shillings each, the price of admission to the gallery being one shilling. It is marvellous how, with this low scale of charges, the receipts mount up. The smallest of the principal theatres enumerated by me holds over two hundred pounds, at average prices, while the taking of the larger houses are frequently from two hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds. Evening dress, save at the Princess Theatre, is not greatly indulged in, but it is gradually coming more into use. For the reason that, with few exceptions, there are no bars within the actual theatre walls, there is not so much drinking between the acts as in England, but in the intervals most of the men make a stampede—for the exterior of the theatre, be it noted—there to indulge in a cigarette. Men have, also, been known to visit a neighbouring "hotel," as the public-houses are called here, there to consume whisky and soda water. I do not wish to imply that drinking between the acts is not a common custom with the gentlemen here, but it is not, probably from the fact that it is not so convenient, nearly so prevalent as at home. As for a lady, if she were merely to suggest a little "light refreshment" during the evening, I should not be surprised if the earth opened and swallowed her up. We are, outwardly at any rate, extremely circumspect in this country, and I fancy the guilty

weight of him who goes out to "see a man" during the progress of a play must be akin to that borne by an assassin. One fact that strikes me very forcibly, and which impresses me more and more with experience, is the youthful nature of the Australian audience. Middle-aged and elderly people are decidedly in the minority, and many of the young people who habitually attend the theatres are of the gentler sex, so that the manager has to be particular in his fare lest he offend paterfamilias. For parents here encourage the play-house, and, by freely consenting to their children seeing stage works, an influence of great good is exercised on the drama. Managers are careful in their productions, while the enthusiasm of youth is a fine stimulus to the actor. Another feature of the Australian audience is the theatre party, which enables a gentleman who cannot return a family dinner to dispense with his obligations by inviting his friends to the theatre. It is a compliment which is always appreciated, and, as the charge for seats is so low, can be easily extended.

Thus far, then, of the theatres and of the audience of Australia. The former, it will be gathered, amply fulfil their purpose, while the latter is all that could be desired. But "the play's the thing." Ay, and the player, too, not to speak of the scenic artist. Of course the manager is greatly guided by London in the choice of a play, and all pieces which are successful there eventually find their way to Australia. The manager's chief difficulty is in finding sufficient plays. Four weeks is a long run here for a comedy or a domestic drama, and a popular melodrama does not often run longer than that time. Again, authors ask such heavy fees for their pieces that there is great risk incurred in their production, and the only way in which they can be made to pay is by withdrawing them in the first instance before their popularity is exhausted, and then reviving them year after year. There is no native dramatist. If there were, he might make a fortune in a few months. The actor, like the author, has every advantage in this country, where he invariably improves, thanks to the broadening influence with which he is surrounded. He is unfettered by conventionality, and if he has mettle in him he cannot fail to make his mark. He has to work harder than at home, but he gains valuable experience, and he is bound, sooner or later, to get a character which will enable him to show what ability he possesses. Thus, for instance, Mr. Robert Brough, known in London only in burlesque and farce, has developed into a character actor and comedian of distinct mark. I have seen him play, among other parts, the Scotch professor in "On 'Change," Graves in "Money," Parson Adams in "Joseph's

Sweetheart," and Tony Lumpkin—all admirable performances; and Mrs. Brough, unknown to London fame, has become a charming comedienne. Her Alma Blake in "The Silver Shield" was a brilliant impersonation. Almost all the actors of any note here are English. There are no native male performers of any distinction known to me. Messrs. Williamson, Garner, and Musgrove's company at present includes Mr. Herbert Flemming, a sound, masterly actor, Mr. Henry Vincent, Mr. Edward Sass, Mr. Alfred Bucklaw, Mr. J. H. Clynds, Mr. E. W. Royce, Mr. W. Elton, Mr. Walker Marnock, Mr. C. M. Leumane, Mr. Frank Emery, Mr. George Walton, Mr. J. P. Burnett, Miss Janet Achurch, Miss Jennie Lee, Miss Clara Cowper, Miss Ada Ward, Miss Maud Williamson, Miss Helen Kinnaird, and Miss Edith Blande, all of whom are English. Most of these ladies and gentlemen hold prominent positions here, and some of their names are not altogether unfamiliar to London play-goers. Messrs. Brough and Boucicault's principal support is found in Mr. G. V. Anson, Mr. G. S. Titheradge, Mr. Percy Lyndal, Mr. Eille Norwood, Mr. Cecil Ward, Mr. W. Holman, Mr. G. Lash Gordon, Miss Fanny Enson, Miss E. Romer, Miss Lucia Harwood, Miss Lilian Seccombe, and other English actors. Mr. George Rignold was supported in "Julius Cæsar" by Mr. J. F. Cathcart as Brutus, Miss Kate Bishop as Portia, and Miss Ronald Watts-Phillips as Lucius. Judging from what little I have seen of the Colonial actor, he cannot be compared to the English player. On the other hand Australia possesses two singer-actresses of distinction—Miss Nellie Stewart and Miss Flora Grampner. Miss Stewart, who, though still quite young, is the elder of the two, is an immensely popular favourite, and, best of all, she deserves her popularity. She is just finishing an engagement of some years as *prima donna* of Messrs. Williamson, Garner, and Musgrove's company. She is of medium height, lithe, and pretty. Her voice is of great range, and her versatility is quite remarkable. I have seen her play Elsie, in "The Yeomen of the Guard," Pepita, in M. Lecocq's opera, Dorothy in Messrs. Stephenson and Cellier's opera, and Yum-Yum in "The Mikado." Each performance was perfect, both in singing and acting, and each was entirely distinct from the other. Miss Stewart is a charming singer and an actress of rare ability and vivacity. Should she appear in London next year, I venture to prophecy that she will make a lasting and favourable impression there. Miss Grampner is a *petite* girl, hardly out of her teens, but she has been on the stage nearly all her life. Her special charm is the unusual purity and sweetness of her voice. She has all the instincts of an artist, and she invariably acts and expresses herself admirably. She has lately sung and played such various

parts as Margaret in "Faust," Nancy in "Martha," and Lazarillo in "Maritana," always singing delightfully, and identifying herself with the character. She has the faculty of sinking herself in the part. She is intensely earnest, and the sweetness of her voice is equalled by a delicacy which distinguishes everything she does. It is not many weeks since I saw her play a boy, the principal part, in a new comic opera, and her spirit, her dash, her brightness, were surprising, and there was never the slightest exaggeration in any respect. This young lady has a brilliant future before her, or I am greatly mistaken. Australia should be proud of two such artists as Miss Nellie Stewart and Miss Flora Grampner, who would do honour to any country. Another favourite Australian actress is Miss Myra Kemble, who is now on a visit to England. Unfortunately I have had no opportunity of forming an opinion as to her merits.

London theatre-goers will be astonished to learn that plays are always as well mounted here as at home, and that not infrequently they are placed on the stage in a far superior manner. In Melbourne I recently saw "A Doll's House," which was mounted at the Princess's Theatre in a beautiful manner. The scene was worthy of the best efforts in this direction ever made by the Bancrofts at the Haymarket. I also saw, at the Theatre Royal, in the same city, "The Silver Falls," the scenery of which was more lovely than that used at the Adelphi. "Julius Cæsar," which is just concluding a run of forty-five nights at Her Majesty's Theatre, Sydney, was placed on the stage by Mr. George Rignold so completely and so splendidly that it reminded me of the Shakesperian revivals at the Lyceum. Here, by the way, let me give a word of praise to the acting of Mr. Rignold as Antony. It was a noble, impressive impersonation, inspiring in its power and tragic force, and, as a piece of declamation, quite the best thing of its kind that I have ever seen on the stage. All the comic operas enumerated by me in connection with Miss Stewart's name were, without exception, more lavishly and more beautifully staged than in London. A special feature of Messrs. Brough and Boucicault's productions, is the scenery which is always tasteful, sometimes, as in the case of "Joseph's Sweetheart," "She Stoops to Conquer," and "Money," absolutely magnificent. The chief scenic artists here are George Gordon, John Brunton, W. Spong, John Hennings, and, "last though not least," Alfred Clint. Some of these names are well-known in England, and certain it is that each particular artist can turn out, in his own line, just as good work as anything that is done in London. Should Mr. Irving or Mr. Wilson Barrett ever visit Australia, there will be no necessity for them then to travel with all the paraphernalia which they take to America.

Australia, in the matter of scenery, is capable of anything. The Australians themselves are not aware that they often see stage-pictures of far greater beauty than they would frequently see at home. The Gilbert-Sullivan operas and the Vaudeville plays are better done, in a scenic sense, in Australia than in London.

One other cause of the immense prosperity of the drama in this country, in addition to the encouragement of the audience, is the manner in which the press upholds it. The two leading papers here, "The Argus," of Melbourne, and "The Sydney Morning Herald," devote much space to the theatres, and, in the matter of criticism greatly guide the public. Both papers are noted for their copious and trenchant first-night essays by experienced hands. The "Sydney Herald," in addition, publishes an "Amusements" article twice a week, on the Wednesday and Saturday, in which local and general theatrical matters are chronicled and discussed. It also gives theatrical news day by day, and on Saturday it publishes a special article in which painting, music, and the drama are commented upon and criticised. The paper thus obtains a vast influence over the drama, and its influence reaches beyond Sydney. All the other newspapers in Australia make a feature of theatrical news, but the "Melbourne Argus," and the "Sydney Morning Herald," from their high positions, hold a power which is paramount.

As I write, Miss Achurch is playing Mercy Merrick in "The New Magdalen," at the Princess Theatre, Melbourne, and "Human Nature," has been lavishly revived at the Royal; at the Alexandra Theatre, in the same city, "The Beggar Student" is drawing large houses under the direction of Mr. Henry Bracy; Miss Jennie Lee is to appear at the Theatre Royal, Sydney, as Jo; and Mr. Rignold will again act Henry V. at his own theatre. At the Criterion, "Sophia" is a great attraction.



A Lover to His Lady

(*On Her Birthday.*)

By CLEMENT SCOTT.



WHAT can I offer, Love, as birthday gift,
 More sweet to thee than thine own Constancy ?
 Love's anchor, when our Life Boat seems to drift,
 Love's beacon pointing to a calmer sea !
 I have no wealth to share, no power to bless ;
 Take then, and keep a sad man's faithfulness !

How poor it seems, amidst the costly gems
 Of birthdays gone, so prodigal in pain,
 To crown thee with love's simplest diadems,
 Sweet unity, and peace that few attain !
 We both have wandered, both are seeking rest,
 Thou in my Faith, and I—upon thy breast !

If I could only, both by pray'r and praise,
 Heal up the wounds that seared so sweet a face !
 Life's pain may stun, but Love is strong to raise
 The tortured soul from passions that debase ;
 Take then and treasure, ere this day departs,
 Thou Pearl of Constancy—my Heart of Hearts !



Our Play-Box.

"LA TOSCA."

Drama in Five Acts, adapted from the French of Victorien Sardou by F. C. GROVE and HENRY HAMILTON.

First produced at the Garrick Theatre, Thursday, Nov. 28th, 1889.

Maria Carolina	Miss ROSE LECLERCQ.	Ascoletti	Mr. R. HARDING.
Floria Tosca	Mrs. BERNARD-BEERE.	Schiarrone	Mr. CHAS. HUDSON.
Baron Scarpia	{ Mr. J. FORBES-ROBERTSON.	Colonetti	Mr. METCALFE.
Count Mario Cavaradossi	Mr. LEWIS WALLER.	Eusebius	Mr. C. DODSWORTH
The Marchese	{ Mr. GILBERT FARQUHAR.	Ceccho	Mr. R. CATHCART.
Attavanti	{ Mr. HERBERT WARING.	Gennarino	Miss BESSIE HATTON.
Cesare Angelotti	Mr. SYDNEY BROUGH.	Paisiello	Mr. F. H. KNIGHT.
Trevillac	{ Mr. LAWRENCE D'ORSAY.	Procurator Fiscal	Mr. R. POWER.
Capreola		Spoletta	Mr. F. POWELL.

The enthusiasm manifested on the fall of the curtain on the first night of "La Tosca" was sufficient evidence of the artistic success that Mr. Hare and his talented company had achieved. That the adapters have done their work well no one will gainsay; in fact, save in one respect—in making Floria Tosca the wife of Cavaradossi, instead of his mistress, as in the original, which many, myself among the number, consider a mistake—they have even improved on the French version. Of the merits of Sardou's play, *as a play*, there is no occasion for me to express an opinion, as I did so in the July number of THE THEATRE of last year, and it was gone into at length in the January number previously; but terrible as is the story in its unmitigated cruelty, it holds an audience spell-bound and hushed, when represented as it is at the Garrick. Mr. Hare deals liberally with his public. We have Miss Rose Leclercq engaged to play Queen Maria Carolina, though she only appears for a few moments in one act, but then there is no other actress who would make the part stand out as a gem. Then we have Mr. Gilbert Farquhar, who can so well represent the courtly though fatuous old noble Attavanti, and Mr. Sydney Brough as the *spirituel* witty Frenchman, Trevillac. Miss Bessie Hatton, again, is selected to play Gennarino, the boy's part, with the result that, though we only see her in the first act, we remember her performance with pleasure, and Mr. Charles Hudson as Schiarrone, the blind executioner of a ruthless master's will, shows himself the fit instrument for any fell purpose. Even of Paisiello, the *maestro*, Mr. Hamilton Knight makes a feature in his one scene by the excellence of his by-play. Of the perfection of the scenery and appointments it is impossible to speak too highly. Let us now turn to the principals. Mrs. Bernard Beere in the first two acts appears to less advantage than later; her love is rather that of a petulant and exacting *mistress*, who knows by what frail tenure she holds her lover, than the abiding affection of a wife

who may be jealous, but is so from temperament rather than from doubt in her husband. But when the time of trial comes, and the unhappy woman discovers that she has been made a tool of Scarpia's, and that her insane suspicions may probably cost Cavaradossi his life, her passion was supreme, and her agony when the man she adores is suffering the torture was! heartrending. And when Scarpia in the next act makes his infamous proposal, her indignation, the struggle that racks her very soul, were powerfully sustained. The actress rose to all the demands made upon her, and proved herself a tragedian of the highest order. Mr. Forbes-Robertson reads Scarpia as a man who allows no obstacle to stand in his path. Outwardly calm, unimpassioned and without feeling, he is at heart a sensualist, gloating over the sufferings of his victim; like a snow-covered volcano, when the lava of his lustful passion bursts forth, it carries him away and brings destruction on everything in its course. In his great scene with La Tosca these two sides of his character were exemplified with a force rising almost to perfection, and the applause with which the actor was greeted showed that his efforts had been appreciated. Mr. Lewis Waller, as Cavaradossi, was all that could be desired—happy and tender in his love-making, strong and manly in his sufferings and his torture. Mr. Herbert Waring gave a poetic reading of Angelotti, noble in the expression of his patriotism, and exhibiting a melancholy pathos when he too truly foretells the end of all his hopes and fears.

"THE PINK DOMINOS."

Comedy in Three Acts, adapted from the French of Delacour and Hennequin by JAMES ALBERY.

Revived at the Comedy Theatre, Saturday, November 23rd, 1889.

Charles Greythorne ..	Mr. CHAS. H. HAWTREY.	2nd Waiter at Cremorne	Mr. WILLIAMS.
Sir Percy Wagstaff	{ Mr. HERBERT	Lady Maggie Wagstaff	Miss ROSE SAKER.
	STANDING.		
Joskin Tubbs	Mr. ALFRED MALTBY.	Sophia	{ Miss GABRIELLE
			GOLDNEY.
Henry Greenlanes	{ Mr. AUBREY	Rebecca	Miss ALMA STANLEY.
	BOUCICAULT.	Mrs. Joskin Tubbs	.. Miss FANNY ROBERTSON.
Brisket	Mr. E. DAGNALL.	Miss Barron	Miss LYDIA COWELL.
1st Waiter at Cremorne	Mr. A. BEARNE.		

Farcical comedy, which was for some time in such favour with London audiences, has not quite lost its hold on them, for Mr. Albery's adaptation of a French piece, at the very name of which Mrs. Grundy years ago shook her head and turned away her face, is now accepted with complacence. Audiences, I think, for the most part go to be amused now-a-days, and do not trouble themselves with looking into motives and peering too closely into the morality of a play that makes them laugh. Dramatic enthusiasts may deplore this, but so long as the competition in the daily race of life is so keen by day, that men and women wish for something that will take them out of themselves, and make them forget the anxieties of their contest, I fear the well-wishers of the drama will find it difficult to altogether raise the tone of authorship or adaptation. And so "The Pink Dominos," that was first played in London at the Criterion, March 31st, 1877, now causes shrieks of

laughter at the Comedy, although Cremorne is but a memory to some, and altogether unknown to many; and although the most charitable would hardly set down as exemplary husbands men who, making excuses to their wives, leave them at home, and accept invitations from *incognitas* to meet them in gardens that were not too well noted for decorum. Nor is the picture of a young and trusting wife being compelled to admit the teaching of her worldly friend that all men have their weaknesses, and that none are pure, a very pleasing one; nor is a doddering old gentleman leaning over an album, subsequently getting tipsy, and thinking he has fascinated an *ingenue* that sups with him, very edifying; or a young lad who ought to be at school making love to a servant maid who poses as a model of propriety, but is in reality the wildest of the wild, very ennobling. But then the late Mr. Albery's writing is so clever, the situations are so genuinely humorous, and fit in so well with each other, that in the laughter the unsavouriness is put on one side, if it cannot be completely lost sight of. Mr. Herbert Standing, the original Sir Percy Wagstaff, is a finished man of the world, and Mr. Charles H. Hawtreys, striking out a line of his own, is certainly very clever as Charles Greythorne, the business man who is looked upon by the innocent Sophia (remarkably well played by Miss Goldney) as the most estimable and devoted husband. Mr. Alfred Maltby is happy as Joskin Tubbs, an old gentleman whom he represents as being silly without being actually vicious. Miss Rose Saker plays the philosophic fashionable Lady Maggie Wagstaff in an easy natural manner. Miss Fanny Robertson showed real humour as the straight-laced but well-meaning Mrs. Tubbs. Miss Alma Stanley, though excellent, was perhaps almost too demure as Rebecca. A roguish twinkle of the eye should now and then have given one a little more insight into the real character of the young woman, whose favourite occupation appeared to be reading "The Pilgrim's Progress." Mr. Aubrey Boucicault, as Henry Greenlanes, the original of which was Mr. Augustus Harris, was good; he has much improved his acting by toning down his superfluous energy. Mr. E. Dagnall ought to have made more of Brisket, one of the most amusing characters in the play. Miss Lydia Cowell, a clever actress that should never be out of an engagement, was inimitable as the "downright *ingenue*," Miss Barron.

"THE JACKAL."

New and original Comedy in Three Acts, by ALEC NELSON.

First produced at the Strand Theatre, Thursday Afternoon, Nov. 28, 1889.

Reginald Smith	Mr. ROYCE CARLETON.	Cyril Pipette	Mr. ERNEST STEVENS.
Jack Hall	Mr. FRED TERRY.	Frier	Mr. CHARLES MILTON.
Mike Fuller	Mr. HARRY EVERSFIELD.	Octavius Dell	Mr. ARTHUR WILLIAMS.
Lewis Myers	Mr. JULIAN CROSS.	Sophie Burroughes ..	Miss MAUD MILTON.
Leo Pick	Mr. HAMILTON KNIGHT.	Ruth	Miss KATE BEALBY.
John Dore	Mr. ARTHUR FENWICK.		

In its present form "The Jackal" will not be seen again, but there are possibilities of its being strengthened and re-written, and the original cast is therefore given. Alec Nelson (Dr. Aveling) has written

some rather poetic little pieces, but there is a bitterness and an Ibsenite exposure of the shadier specimens of humanity in his work that would give one a contempt for mankind, were we all such mean or weak creatures as he sets before us. Reginald Smith is a hard-drinking, dissolute fellow who is generally supposed to be a talented dramatist and writer, the work for which he gets credit being really done by Jack Hall (nicknamed the Jackal). Why Hall does this, no one can understand, for he gets nothing but abuse from the man for whom he does so much. His eyes are opened at last, however, for Reginald Smith, in order to compromise Sophie Burroughes, a rising actress, gets her to his rooms, but her reputation is saved by Hall, who, thinking her all that is pure and good, is madly in love with her. She is anything but an estimable character; she is a *divorcée*, encourages every man she comes across, and only by the merest chance escapes from marriage with Reginald, which, had the author only allowed it, would have dealt but justly with the worthy pair. The character of Ruth, Reginald's sister, is intended for a sympathetic one, but the young girl looks with too little horror on her brother's misdeeds to make her quite loveable. Miss Bealby, who gave the *matinée*, played Ruth. She was agreeable and bright, but must gain experience. Miss Maud Milton showed considerable resource as the worthless actress, but it was impossible to make the part a good one. Mr. Royce Carleton was an arch villain, and Mr. Fred Terry excellent as the good-natured, trusting Jack Hall. Mr. Arthur Williams made a hit as the kind-hearted, battered old broker's man, Octavius Dell, and the other characters were done the most with by their respective exponents.

"THE GOLD CRAZE."

New Play in Four Acts, written by BRANDON THOMAS.

First produced at the Princess's Theatre, Saturday, Nov. 30, 1889.

Jonas Merton	Mr. J. BEAUCHAMP.	Rogers	Mr. I. C. BEVERLEY.
Colonel Verity, V.C. ..	Mr. BRANDON ELLIS.	Sergeant	Mr. W. EDWARDS.
Philip Verity	Mr. W. HERBERT.	Footman	Mr. L. MACKINTOSH.
Baron de Fleurville ..	Mr. J. H. BARNES.	Barton	Mr. W. LAWSON.
Smith	Mr. ROBERT PATEMAN.	Largny	Mr. E. GIRARDOT.
Poppleton	Mr. SAINT MATTHEWS.	Mons. Berton	Mr. E. MAYEUR.
Smale	Mr. A. EDMORE.	Dutch Billy	Mr. W. S. PARKES.
Captain Croft	Mr. STEPHEN CAFFEY.	Welsh Morgan	Mr. G. DALZIEL.
Jones and Robinson ..	Messrs. J. WILLIAMS and W. HODGES.	Cornish Jack	Mr. MORETON BAKER.
Mr. Littlefold	Mr. F. M. PAGET.	Brown	Mr. W. J. AUBREY.
The Revd. Mr. Jorgina ..	Mr. EARLE DOUGLAS.	Luey Merton	Miss AMY ROSELLE.
Alderman Boarder	Mr. G. B. PHILLIPS.	Miss Primley	Miss FANNY BROUGH.
Major-General Terrier ..	Mr. T. WARLOW.	Marie alias Mathilde ..	Miss A. DAIROLLES.
Doctor Arlington	Mr. A. WHITEHEAD.	Mrs. Edwards	Mrs. DURANT.

When an author has turned out such good work as Mr. Brandon Thomas has in "Comrades," "The Colour Sergeant," and "A Highland Legacy," it might naturally have been expected that when he ventured on melodrama we should get something of at least average merit, more particularly if we bear in mind that he is an actor of standing, and should have considerable knowledge of stage effect. "The Gold Craze" was a woeful disappointment, and no amount of alteration by the author can make it a success. His dialogue, generally so good, was mostly commonplace, some prettily worded and

pathetic speeches were spoilt by being inordinately long, and by being delivered at inopportune moments, and his characters were robbed of their interest by their inconsistent actions. The story runs on almost the conventional lines—a villain betrayed by an accomplice whom he deceives, a heroine that the villain wishes to make his own, and a hero, who in order that his ruin or death may be accomplished, is made to appear the committer of a forgery, is sent out to the Africa gold fields to be attacked by infuriated miners, and is induced to attempt an escape from a French prison that he may be shot down by the sentries. Sundry tirades on cheap German labour and grinding down the Englishman, a little love-making between an imbecile old cashier and a sharp-spoken but good-hearted old maid, make up the sum and substance of the whole. Only those who saw the piece on the first night are aware of how much credit is due to all those who appeared for so bravely fighting against adverse odds. Before the first act was half over, that titter that the actor so well knows and dreads had begun, and once that is set up, good-bye to all hope for the rest of the play. All I can say is that it was no fault of anyone in the cast that “The Gold Craze” was a failure. They all did their best, and therefore no one individually should be singled out for praise or censure. If one or two did not do all that might have been expected of them under happier circumstances, the blame must be laid upon the author.

“THE GONDOLIERS, OR THE KING OF BARATARIA.”

Original Comic Opera, in two Acts, by W. S. GILBERT and ARTHUR SULLIVAN.

First produced at the Savoy Theatre, Saturday December 7th, 1889.

The Duke of Plaza-Toro	Mr. FRANK WYATT.	Ottavio	Mr. C. GILBERT.
Luiz	Mr. BROWNLOW.	The Duchess of Plaza-Toro	Miss ROSINA BRANDRAM.
Don Alhambra del Bolero	Mr. DENNY.	Casilda	Miss DECIMA MOORE.
Mareo Palmieri	Mr. COURTICE POUNDS.	Gianetta	Miss GERALDINE ULMAR.
Giuseppe Palmieri	Mr. RUTLAND BARRINGTON.	Tessa	Miss JESSIE BOND.
Antonio	Mr. MEDCALE.	Fiametta	Miss LAWRENCE.
Francesco	Mr. ROSE.	Vittoria	Miss COLE.
Giorgio	Mr. DE PLEDGE.	Glulia	Miss PHYLLIS.
Annibale	Mr. WILBRAHAM.	Inez	Miss BERNARD.

From the unanimous approval bestowed on “The Gondoliers” on the opening night, this, the latest production of the celebrated collaborators, is likely to prove one of their most enduring successes. Both the author and the musician have returned to their earlier and lighter vein of composition, and have never given us a happier result. The story as treated by Mr. Gilbert is a most amusing one. The two handsome gondoliers, Marco and Guisepe, take to themselves as wives Gianetta and Tessa. Their felicity is disturbed by its being discovered that one of them, but which no one at present can tell, is the King of Baratania. The Grand Inquisitor had, to save the life of the heir to the kingdom, brought him as a child to Venice, and entrusted him to a worthy gondolier, who also possessed one child, and somehow the two children have got “mixed.” This is the more awkward as the Duke and Duchess of Plaza-Toro arrive, attended only by a drummer, in search of the heir to the throne, their



daughter Casilda having been wedded to him in her infancy. However, as the throne must be filled, the gondoliers, until it is known for certain which is the rightful sovereign, must reign in common, and in the second act we have them as joint rulers, but as they rule on strictly constitutional principles they are on very short commons, as rations are only allowed for one. But presently the foster mother, wife of the gondolier to whom the infant prince had been entrusted,

arrives, and, after undergoing a ludicrous examination and (supposed) torture, declares that neither Marco or Giuseppe is the king, but Luiz, the private drummer of the Duke, a fortunate *dénouement* that suits all parties, as Casilda is deeply in love with him. I much regret that want of space prevents my dilating on the "merry conceits" and ludicrously witty lines; but I shall hope to return to the subject next month, and give the individual actors and actresses their full meed of praise. All were so truly excellent that had



the opera been bad instead of so exceptionally clever, they would have almost certainly made of it a success. The two scenes, a view of Venice and an interior in the Court of Barataria, are miracles of beauty and perfection in scene painting. CECIL HOWARD.

Our Amateurs' Play-Box.



"MAKING-BELIEVE" is the one abiding joy of childhood, if we be nice, sensible interesting children, who promise better things than to become Prince Prigios, for instance; and "making-believe" remains the joy of a maturer state, judging from the countless host of actors *in esse* and *in posse* whom even poor, old, shop-keeping England annually turns out, half-baked for the most part. Even Charity cannot extend her gracious hand, and administer her universal three-penny bit, without dressing up after somebody

or other and indulging in some suitable *mise-en-scène*. And if it cannot be with stage and powder and patches and limelight, then it shall still be make-believe in less dramatic shape, with the audience on the platform as in the olden days, and spectators freely

mingling with the players. Which latter have been hardly put to it of late for some novel elements of interest, seeing that everything and everybody, from Shakespeare's creations to Barnum's clowns, have figured in social shows of this description; and the Duchess of Montrose and the Marchioness of Breadalbane opened up another track for fair adventurers in these fields when they flung wide the doors of their *Café Chantant*, in Glasgow, last month. What with the glories of Morocco and of Ind, a feast of colour; and the troops of baby-fairies in wings and gauzy clouds of gossamer, not a whit in awe of menacing Mrs. Fawcett and the mighty Commons; and the lack of that sovereign-for-a-buttonhole and shilling-for-a-cigarette demand which enjoys the unique distinction of being vastly in excess of its individual supply; to look and look would have been, like Jaikes' yearning gaze upon the cookshop dainties, as good as a Lord Mayor's banquet, had not the home for Glasgow Children cried for money, and the drama revealed its charms in the shape of Dr. Blatherwick's pretty and quaint little comedy, "*The Admiral's Ghost*," and the old, old "*Fair Encounter*" (so enlivened and renewed under the skilful touches of Miss Margot Tennant and Miss Menzies that Aladdin's lamp could have worked no greater change), which together provided as pleasant an hour or two as any could have wished to pass, and materially contributed to that princely pile of thirteen hundred sovereigns which the noble mistresses of these kindly ceremonies have now to transform into food and clothing and rosy cheeks for the little ones.

The true success is to labour. So we say at fifty, with the world behind us and most of our arrows sped. At five-and-twenty it is "True labour must mean success." But in which of the two lies the truth matters little, at any rate for Mr. B. W. Findon, who is content with coming half-way between with his comedy, "*Stella*," produced on November 21st at St. George's Hall. He has laboured commendably and come nigh success, yet his success has lain in the conscientious quality of the labour, and he will be wise to redouble his toil and his care over play number two. Mr. Jones is his model, seemingly, and a better guide he could not find. The ponderous banker and his still more ponderous secret are nearly worn out, it is true, and what we should have done without Mr. C. W. A. Trollope's skilful handling of both it were rash to enquire; but the main lines of the theme apart, the author shows a pretty ingenuity in twisting his threads, some appreciation of the value of pithy and pointed dialogue, and a distinct gift in the direction of character drawing. These qualities were displayed to the utmost advantage by reason of the admirable stage management, for which the experienced Mr. Trollope, the student's manual and amateur's friend, was, of course, responsible, and the general smoothness and emphasis of the whole performance, special reference being made to the breadth and colour of Miss Lizzie Henderson's acting, Mrs. Findon's brightness

and charm, Mr. Rogers' discretion in a dangerous part, and the "Saints and Sinners" deacons, excellently written in, of Mr. Athill and Mr. Aslett.

Melodrama should always be played with power; if not with that sort that comes of passion, intensity, and cyclonic disturbance of the nerve centres, then with the might that bursts forth in the guise of leather lungs, Sandow-ed shoulders, the gait of a giant, and the bearing of a bravo. And amateurs therefore come badly off in the world of dramatic bunkum, as a rule, for inspiration among them is rare, and the large-chested, cathedral-organed style is hard to acquire, because of their diffidence in the matter of false heels, padded frock coats, and the manners of a music-hall chairman. It is consequently somewhat surprising that the West London Dramatic Club tackled "The Golden Plough" in such a workman-like way on the 23rd November, and that the complications and mysteries and unrivalled stabbing-acts of Mr. Paul Meritt's exciting play should have proved as exhilarating as they did, in spite of the cramped stage and none too realistic scenery. But the heart of every actor, or nearly every one, was in his work, and this, coupled with the exceptional strength of this story of situations, accounted for the fact that everyone before the footlights had his heart in his mouth while the murder was being committed and the murderer trapped. But for this Mr. Blair Hickman must have had that harsh laugh of his voted a bore, and then what would have become of the twenty good points in his vigorous Jerry Blake, and Mr. Martin Cahill would have been reminded that anxiety is not the same thing as agony, and in that mild word of censure the manliness and simplicity of his boyish school-master must have been forgotten; and in the noting of Mrs. Woollard Edgley's occasional strained emphasis, the marked intelligence and power of her Grace Royal might have been overlooked. But earnestness saved the day, and the West London, having put their hands to the plough and never looked behind, can try another furrow without fear of failure.

When one is "more than seven," it becomes a puzzle to understand the enjoyment of making mud pies. And when such actors as the Windsor Strollers deliberately sit down by the roadside and play "Betsy," the same kind of problem is presented. Not that "Betsy" is a dramatic mud-pie. Quite the contrary. It is puff-pastry, light as air, cooked to a turn by the nattiest of cooks, digestible as Bovril, and with more than the usual allowance of "jam," made only of the most carefully selected English fruit. But there has been such a large business done in French pastry that the Windsor Players might well have prepared a novelty to open their season with. The audience thought otherwise without question, though, for they laughed over the drolleries of Captain Gooch and Mr. Quintin Twiss as heartily as if they never had heard of

the Criterion and poor old Hill and Alfred Maltby, which indeed to all intents they never had as long as these twin stars in the amateur firmament twinkled as Birkett and Dawson, so that not a dry eye in the house, even among the band, was found to be witness to the presence of sobering memory. Still it was a pleasure to come to the second night, the 28th November, and watch them in the web of *The Money Spinner*. Mr. Pinero is so virile a writer that he demands unusual force and intensity of everyone who tries to realise his characters, and none but the pick of the amateurs could afford to play his serious work. The Windsor company including these, the trial became most interesting. It was in the humour of the piece the actors shone brightest, of course ; the finish and unctuousness of Captain Gooch as Baron Croodle having Mr. Alan Mackinron's ease and polish as Lord Kengussie to match them, and both actors doing quite notable work. Captain Liddell's study of Faubert was surprisingly complete and remarkably French. What it lacked in suggestion and incisiveness it almost made up in force and ability ; and another and greater success has now to be recorded in this part this season. Mr. Charles Lamb has very few rivals among amateur "juveniles," and his Harold Boycott, a difficult and thankless part, showed him at his best, alert and expressive, earnest and forcible. Miss Marie Linden's Millicent was better for its promise than its performance ; it raised hopes that she may soon have a chance of attacking pathos when such heavy demands on her strength are not requisite ; and, apart from the actors' triumphs, that result alone would be a good return for the Strollers' happy innovation this year.

The Momus A. D. C. are fairly at home in comedy, as they should be, and have the good taste and enterprise to keep as much abreast of the times as Mr. French and the Dramatic Authors' Society will allow them, by playing the most recent works they can lay hands on ; Mr. H. A. Jones's idyllic "Harmony" and the pungent Mr. Grundy's polished "Silver Shield" supplying them with a programme on the 26th November more interesting by far than the usual mixture of Byron and Brough. Mr. Gordon Taylor has ability of no common order, and the versatility disclosed in the course of his blind organist in the first piece, and square-shouldered bluff Bohemian hero in the second, did great credit to his imaginative no less than his executive powers. Mr. Grundy's play wanted pulling together and working up. It was too much outline and too little detail. The stage management was crude and conventional ; and the gentleman responsible for it should take a seat for the season at the Lyceum or the Garrick and learn how delicate business is arranged and difficult positions worked. This done and profited by, and body and spirit thrown into the play as a whole, the Momus would handle the Shield without blurring its wonderful brightness, for the actors taken singly did

well enough and made good capital frequently out of the opportunities with which the play is literally crammed. Mr. Rowney should have "damned good-natured friends" in front at every rehearsal to pull him up for every feeble gesture; then his Ned would be natural as well as young and pleasant and impulsive. Mr. Teversham's Dozey was rather too slow, but it had plenty of humour to commend it; and Mr. Dawson treated Dodson Dick as the essence of eccentricity, which shrewd managers certainly are not. The sentiment and humour among the actresses were supplied by Miss Hoskins and Miss Scanlan, the latter being very "professional" in the heroine's stagey scenes of temper and defiance.

There were just four reasons why the Hampstead Club should have tried their hands at Mr. Buchanan's "Sophia," and those four just outweighed the eight or ten others there were for leaving it alone. These latter lay in the peculiar unfitness of the club's utility men to do anything beyond getting into the clothes of the characters of Fielding's "Tom Jones;" *getting into not wearing*, be it observed; and in the case of an English classic this becomes a very important point, for it is nothing short of an artistic crime to despoil us of our fancies of Allworthy and Square and Seagrim, Supple and Corpse and Partridge, and try to have us believe they were mild-mannered gentlemen all of a pattern, all a wee bit frightened of lace ruffles, knee-breeches, and frilled shirts, and all with a spirit about equal to that of the clerical heroes of the much esteemed Miss Emma Jane Worboise. The Blifil too could never have taken in even the Hampstead version of his benefactor; and as Fielding insists so very strongly on the insinuating qualities of his double-distilled Joseph Surface, in addition to the others' clearly defined qualities, one had to drop four-fifths of the players and concentrate one's attention on the minority who composed the four reasons *pro* the play. Mr. H. W. Preston is a talented actor, ingenious and finished in character parts, but a little out of his element as a hero; his Tom, however, was frank and honest, picturesque and interesting, and where he failed to move his audience it was as much their fault as his. Mr. Morton Henry was quite as highly coloured as Squire Western as was Mr. Fred Thorne, and the amateur had the advantage of knowing how to tone down some of the coarseness. Miss K. Sinclair gave us a portrait of Molly in all her simplicity and waywardness we wish never to see fade, and Mrs. Thompson in the gentler scenes of Sophia could scarcely have been excelled for charm and naturalness. These were the four by whose means the whole edifice was saved, and who won for the play a reception that would have delighted even Mr. Buchanan; but when next the Hampstead actors choose old comedy, let them keep a warier eye on the utility, or else engage Mr. Charles Harris to stage manage.

The members of the Brunswick House Dramatic Club gave the third performance of their present season on Monday evening, December 9th. The pieces chosen were, "A Rough Diamond," Sydney Grundy's "In Honour Bound," and a revised version, by Messrs. Edgeworth and Lunnon, of Byron's burlesque drama, "The Rosebud of Stinging-Nettle Farm." The first-named piece was acted with spirit. "In Honour Bound" was not well played. The stage was far too dark, a little more care might have been given to the appointments, and the play itself was taken in too slow a time. Mr. Frank Graham played the character of Sir George Carlyon with earnestness. Mr. T. Sadler, as Philip Graham, was not quite at his ease, but was withal fairly good. The Lady Carlyon of Miss St George was very tame. This lady will, however, do much better when she has gained more experience. Miss Lily Philips, as Rose Dalrymple, was successful. In the burlesque, which was very well mounted, Mr. W. H. Edgeworth as Sir Narcissus Slapdash proved that he is no novice at stagework. This gentleman will do good things yet, and we shall watch his career with interest. Messrs. E. Lunnon, S. Marsland, P. Leslie, and H. C. Knight, were good in their respective parts; and Mr. H. J. Husbands, as the landlord was very funny. Both Miss Kate Vernon and Miss Evelyn Wells were excellent, and by their vivacity did a lot towards making the burlesque a success. The music throughout the evening was execrable. The next performance of the club will take place on Jan. 13th

Our Musical-Box.

The London Ballad Concerts commenced on Nov. 20th., and the first of the series as usual attracted a large audience. None of the novelties proved very wonderful: Molloy's "Bantry Bay" is dismal; Hope Temple's "Love and Friendship" mediocre; Stephen Adams' "This Workaday World" nothing very special; and Marzial's "Stay, Darling, Stay" lamentably poor stuff. These were rendered by Mme. Sterling, Mr. Edward Lloyd, Mme. Belle Cole, and Mr. Henry Piercy respectively. "Off to Philadelphia" is a capital Irish song, and was capitally sung by Mr. Plunket Greene. The other artists were Miss Alice Gomez, who sang Henschel's "Spinning Wheel Song" delightfully; Mr. Arthur Oswald, Mrs. Mary Davies, and Miss

Lehmann ; Madame Neruda and Mr. Eaton Fanning's select choir. At the second evening concert, on the 4th, *mirabile dictu*, the hall was scarcely half full. More novelties, none very striking, were introduced, and a certain semi-classical element prevailed, as at the first concert.

Poor Fred Clay ! Struck down by paralysis on the 4th of December, 1883, his last six years have been clouded indeed. His was a prolific and melodious pen, but it is by his songs he will be best remembered—by "The Sands of Dee," "I'll Sing the Songs of Araby" (from the cantata, "Lalla Rookh"), and "She Wandered Down the Mountain Side." "The Merry Duchess," at the Royalty ; "Princess Toto," at the Strand and afterwards the Comique, did not meet with the success they merited. "The Golden Ring," produced at the Alhambra the night before he was stricken, was more ambitious, and gave promise of higher work than any that had flowed from his pen. Scarcely a notice of his death—he was buried at Brompton on November 29th—but commenced "Poor Fred Clay." He had many friends ; and Death's hand has been near to him for so long that it will surely lie lightly on him now.

Musical England, forsooth ! When Sir Charles Halle brings his superb band from Manchester and plays to a half-empty hall ! Twelve years ago he tried the same experiment, and failed ; and it looks as if failure again awaited him, judging from the vacant seats in St. James's Hall on Nov 22nd, at the first of his four concerts. The "Anacreon" overture has rarely been so finely given. Lady Halle excelled herself in Beethoven's D Concerto ; and Berlioz's "Symphonie Fantastique" formed the *pièce de résistance*, magnificently interpreted. Not the most inveterate Philistine could call such a programme too classical. Yet a half-empty hall ! At the second concert on the 6th, to musical London's apparent credit, things wore a better aspect. The programme included two excerpts from Schubert's "Rosamunde," Beethoven's No. 4 Concerto, played by Sir Charles with his customary finished execution, and Dvorak's characteristic No. 3 Symphony.

The Monday and Saturday "Pops" pursue the even tenor of their way ; no great novelty has been brought forward. Dr. Villiers Stanford's Sonata in D minor for piano and 'cello was repeated on the 7th.

Mr. Frederic Cowen's "Old English Idyll," as it is called, "St. John's Eve," was produced for the first time at the Crystal Palace Saturday concert on the 14th. It is a bright and melodious setting to Mr. Joseph Bennett's story, characteristic and pleasant to hear, without pretending to be a great work. The instrumentation is exceedingly dainty and delicate throughout, and two of the eleven

numbers are very happy, the chorus "Ho, Good St John," and the duet for soprano and tenor. The work is by no means beyond the powers of an average Choral Society, and wherever it is heard, its simplicity of character will win it popularity and approval. The solo parts were taken by Miss Macintyre, Miss Hilda Wilson, Mr. Edward Lloyd and Mr. Plunket Greene, who appeared to be suffering from a cold. The Crystal Palace choir and orchestra satisfactorily performed their share of the work; and the composer himself conducted, receiving an enthusiastic call at its conclusion.

Exit "La Prima Donna," the 14th. Not even clever Chevalier could save her. Had it been as funny at first as this comedian made it at last, it would have had a long run. Tapley, Marsh, Sinclair, Capel all worked hard; Sara Palma, Laura Clement, Amelia Gruhn, all sang well—to no avail. *Elle se finit.*

At the London Symphony concert on the 12th a "Notturmo" by Mozart, for four separate small orchestras, was given. It is a curiosity, the four orchestras taking up a phrase in turn, one after the other, but little musical interest can be attached to it.

Concerts are too many to particularise. On the 4th. and 11th. Mr. and Mrs. Henschel's vocal recitals; on the 4th "Lucifer" at the Albert Hall; the Post Office concert on the 7th.; Trinity College orchestral, the 9th; Stock Exchange orchestral, the 10th; the R.A.M. Students, the 11th.; and the Strolling Players' concert on the 14th.

What atrocious orchestras are to be heard at some of the London music-halls! At the Oxford, for instance, where certainly but little has been spent on paint and gilding for some time past. The Royal is much better in both respects, the band being small but well chosen. The Pavilion orchestra is better still. Surely those who go to such places—and they are a large class—do not want to be deafened with drum or brained with brass all the time. The Trocadero band wants some of the new manager's smartness; it is too loud at times and not loud enough at others. Of that at the Empire it is needless to speak; it is a treat to listen to it, whatever it plays. Mr. Leopold Wenzel "stands," literally, in the place of M. Hervé, and also does so musically, with ability. But I do not like Hervé's ballet music so well as that of Past Master Jacobi.

I shall have a lengthy something to say about "The Gondoliers" at the Savoy next month. Not at a first night, or at a first hearing, can one properly appreciate the grace of Sir Arthur's score. As to its success, to quote Mr. Gilbert's own words, "never knew such unanimity . . . in my life!"

"Paul Jones" comes off at The Prince of Wales' early in the year, to make way for Mr. Slaughter's "Marjorie."——C. H. R. Marriott, composer of "Thy Face" and many other songs, is dead.

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

Our Omnibus=Box.

The attention of readers of the THEATRE is called to the fact that the new volume for 1890 begins with this, the January, number. Intending subscribers are therefore asked to send in their names to the publishers at as early a date as possible.

"Sweet Lavender" is, we understand, at length to pass into the *pot pourri* of pleasant memories, Mr Terry having decided to withdraw it early in the year that he may enjoy a few weeks well-earned rest. This play must take rank in the list of phenomenal successes.

Miss Agnes Huntington, after finishing a four years' course of study with the great Maestro Lamperti, of Dresden, joined the operatic stage some three years ago. She first sang in America with the "Boston Ideals," remaining with them about a year, and then migrated for one season to the "Bostonians," a company recruited from the best talent of the "Ideals." Miss Huntington then signed a contract with the late Carl Rosa for Grand Opera, Oratorio, and Light Opera, and Mr. Carl Rosa, thinking that the last named should be well represented, begged Miss Huntington to take the part of "Paul Jones." His sound judgment was verified in this really great singer's phenomenal success at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, London, where for the whole year Miss Huntington's popularity has been steadily increasing, not only with musicians and the fashionable world, but with the patrons of the pit and gallery. From all classes she has received letters, tributes of esteem and admiration, some of them costly gifts, in cases but a simple flower from some humble enthusiast, but none the less valued on that account. Miss Huntington's next *rôle* at the Prince of Wales's Theatre will be of quite a different and more sympathetic character, and one which will afford her greater opportunity for the display of her talents, both as a singer and an actress.

Miss Viola Clemmons made her *début* at the Shakespeare Theatre, Liverpool, on Thursday, Dec. 12, 1889, as "Theodora," in Robert

Buchanan's version of Sardou's play of that name. The young actress showed very great promise, indeed, and her success in such an arduous rôle was surprising for one possessing no experience. Miss Clemmons has good looks, a pleasing voice, expressive eyes, and great play of feature ; and as she will probably be seen in London ere long, it is well to record her first appearance in England.

Mr. Fred Leslie made his first appearance in London as Colonel Hardy in "Paul Pry" at the Royalty Theatre in 1878, followed by engagements at the Folly (now Toole's Theatre) under Madame Dolaro's management, and at the Alhambra, where he played in "La Petite Mademoiselle," "La Fille du Tambour Major" (Duc della Volta), "Mephistopheles II," (Faust), "The Bronze Horse," (1881, Prince Yoko). A trip to America ensued, from whence Mr. Leslie returned to the Avenue to play the Marquis de Pontsable in "Madame Favart" (1882), and Don José de Manilla in "Les Manteaux Noirs." Mr. Leslie was next engaged to fill the title rôle in "Rip Van Winkle" (one of his most successful characters) at the Comedy (1882), and then paid another visit to the United States, appearing at the Casino, New York. On his return he filled his old part in the revival of "Rip Van Winkle" and played Ayala in "The Grand Mogul" at the Comedy (Nov., 1884). In Nov., 1885, he appeared in "The Fay o' Fire" at the Opera Comique. On December 26, 1885, commenced his long engagement at the Gaiety as Jonathan Wild in "Little Jack Sheppard;" in 1886 (Dec. 23) as Noirtier in "Monte Christo, Jun.;" in 1887 (Dec. 24), as the Monster in "Frankenstein." The entire Gaiety Company then visited Australia and America, in which country Mr. Leslie was offered a most splendid engagement, but returned with the Company to England to re-open at the Gaiety as Don Cæsar de Bazan in "Ruy Blas and the Blasé Roué," a clever burlesque of which he is the joint author under the *nom de plume* of A. C. Torr. Mr. Leslie's career has been one continued triumph, and, as was said by his old friend Arthur Roberts, at a public dinner lately: "Any actor who can play Rip Van Winkle and Jonathan Wild, and play them well, is an ornament to his profession."

When Mr. John Hollingshead lighted "the sacred lamp" at the Gaiety in 1868, Miss Nellie Farren as she was then affectionately called, was at once named by him the "Queen of Burlesque" on her appearance in "Robert the Devil." Since that date this most talented actress has been not only associated with every success, but has secured it at this house. To enumerate the parts in which she has appeared at the Gaiety would be simply to give a history of the theatre. Her welcome home on Sept. 21, 1889, on her return from America, will never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Miss Farren has discovered the secret of perpetual youth, and every year as it glides by appears to leave her younger, a more accomplished actress, and a greater favourite with the public.

We have received a parcel of beautiful Christmas and New Year's booklets and cards from the publishing house of Hildesheimer and Faulkner. Judging from the specimens sent us, we should say the art of colour printing in Germany is decidedly progressing. Germany has done her work well. We notice, however, with some satisfaction, that all the best of the cards and booklets are designed in England.

A selection of Christmas cards reaches us also from Messrs. Raphael Tuck & Co. Where all are excellent it is unnecessary to particularise ; but the correspondence cards with designs of birds in rose-tinted gilding are, perhaps, amongst the most handy and graceful. A comical design of children of different nationalities linked together like love-birds is quite capital.

For the illustrations to "The Gondoliers" and to "Amateurs' Play-Box," we are indebted to the courtesy of the proprietors of "The Lady's Pictorial."

New plays produced and important revivals in London, from Nov. 20, 1889 to December 9, 1889.

*(Revivals are marked thus *)*

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|------|-----------------|--|
| Nov. | 20 | "Taken by Storm," drama in three acts, by Hal Collier, (first time in London). Britannia. |
| " | 21 | "Stella," play in three acts, by B. W. Findon. St. George's Hall. |
| " | 23 | "The Red Hussar," new comedy opera in three acts, written by H. P. Stephens, music by Edward Solomon. Lyric. |
| " | 23 ^a | "The Pink Dominos," comedy in three acts, adapted from the French of Delacour and Hennequin, by James Albery. Comedy. |
| " | 25 | "Our Summer Holiday," comedy in two acts, by Frank Norris. Lad-broke Hall. |
| " | 25 | "Master and Man," drama in four acts, by Messrs. Henry Pettitt and G. R. Sims. Grand. |
| " | 27 | "Run to Earth," four act drama. Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court Road. |
| " | " | "All Jackson's Fault," farce by Alice O'Connell. Athenæum Hall, Tottenham Court Road. |
| " | 28 | "The Jackal," original comedy in three acts, by Alec Nelson. Strand. |
| " | 28 | "La Tosca," adaptation, in five acts, by F. C. Grove and Henry Hamilton of Victorien Sardou's drama. Garrick. |
| " | 30 | "The Gold Craze," new play in four acts, written by Brandon Thomas. Princess's. |
| " | 30 | "The Spy," military drama in five acts. Novelty. |
| Dec. | 4 | "Gretna Green," English comedy opera in three acts, written by T. Murray Ford. Music by John Storer. Mus. Doc. |
| " | 5 | "Madcap Midge," new domestic comedy in three acts, by Charles S. Fawcett. Opera Comique. |
| " | 7 | "The Gondoliers, or the King of Barataria," original comic opera in two acts, by W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan. Savoy. |
| " | 9 | "To the Rescue," original comedietta, by Dora V. Greet. Court. |

Dec. 9 "The Verger," written by Walter Frith, music by King Hall. St. George's Hall.

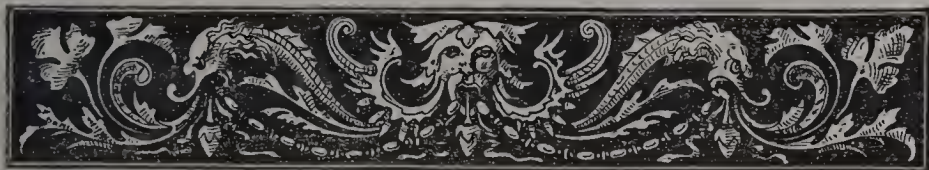
In the Provinces, from Nov. 11, 1889, to Nov. 27, 1889.

- Nov. 15 "Woman's Vengeance," drama in a prologue and three acts, by H. Swinerd. T. Royal Artillery, Woolwich.
- „ 18 "Theodora," adaptation in five acts by Robert Buchanan of Victorien Sardou's play. T. R. Brighton.
- „ 18 "A Lucky Girl," musical melodrama in three acts, by S. J. Adair Fitzgerald. New Royal, Liverpool.
- „ 19 "The Antiquarian," farce by G. Stead. Royal Artillery Theatre, Woolwich.
- „ 20 "The Orchard of the King," one act romantic play, founded on the French of Theodore de Banville, by Ernest Day and Maurice H. Footman. T. R. Lincoln.
- „ 20 "The Phonograph," comedietta by A. C. Fraser Wood. St. George's Hall, Walsall.
- „ 27 "Grapeshot," new "whimsicality in one volley," written by Wilford F. Field. Public Rooms, Southall.
- „ 27 "Cupid's Frolic," one act comedietta, by Wilford F. Field. Public Rooms, Southall.

In Paris, from Nov. 13, 1889, to Nov. 24, 1889.

- Nov. 18 "L'Embarras du Choix," one act comedy, by Alfred Bonsergent. Odéon.
- „ 21 "Les Respectables," three act comedy, by Ambroise Janvier de la Motte. Vaudeville.
- „ 24 "Le Train de Plaisir," vaudeville in four acts, by M. M. Hennequin Mortier and St. Albin. Palais Royal.
- „ 24 "Le Coucou," five act drama by Leopold Stapleaux. Beaumarchais.





TERENTIUS AFER PUBLIUS, ESQ.

20th, Dec. 1889.

MY DEAR TERENCE,—

As in the starry Republic of which you are now a member (I trust not a warm member) all little social distinctions are waived, you will not probably esteem impertinence the fact of being addressed from this "mortal coil" by the kindred spirit in those lime-lit alleys of life which you affected in your own time and way, who signs himself your humble servant at the foot of this trifling epistle. For, if not of the sock and buskin, he has at least lived in their neighbourhood the most of his brief days, and set as many legs a'scampering with his shrill call as ever did the Piper of Hamelin; and in this connection it has occurred to him that chance jottings noted down here and there for your peculiar delectation might serve, perhaps, to recall to you ancient interests, and somewhat vary the tedious monotony of that world of spirits, spoken of by many fathers of many churches, wherein all the harps seemed to be tuned to a perpetual concert of Toy Symphonies. So here's for a slap at the matter, my broth-of-a-boy (query, one who comes of a good *stock*?) as your namesake Terence O'Brien would have dubbed you, and if you find the thing not to your taste, you can just put my notes into Mother Goose's waste-paper basket in the clouds up there.

It's the fashion to say there's nothing new under the sun, Terence, my dear, and so we must all plagiarise or sit mum. You did a bit of that same yourself, if I remember rightly. Wasn't it one Julius Cæsar, in whose mouth jests were less frequent than eye-teeth, who loved to call you the demi-Menander of Comedy? Never mind; but if it was difficult to originate in B.C. 168, what must it be two thousand years later?

Nowadays we don't write for posterity—or, as our friend Mrs. Ramsbotham would say "a man's posterior is no longer the end he has in view." And right for you, old lady, for we have discarded the ape in most things but the faculty of imitation. We can't do it. You and others, Terence, have borrowed the best of our ideas. You have taken the melons and left us nothing but the stalks and the hot-bed. We must be content to catch the public ear momentarily by desperate ruses that have an air of originality about them, but are hollow behind like the face of the Elf-maid, Tut! the world grows grey and the enthusiasms of youth vanish one by one. *Singula de nobis anni prædantur euntes.*

Do you get the latest intelligence up aloft? Maybe you have not heard of the newest craze in what was in your own line once upon a day? It is yecept the "Ibsen Cult," and expresses the refinement of prolixity. Ask your knowing City man the shortest cut to a building you see a hundred yards in a straight line before you, and he will direct you thither by a maze of tortuous alleys and inter-office lanes that seem to your inexperienced eye positively misleading.

Ask Gammer Ibsen for a situation, and he will show you to it by way of tedious passages that are calculated to impress you with his thorough intimacy with all the ins and outs of the passions, but fail to do more than weary you consumedly on your march to the *dénouement*. Then, presto! he brings you up with a jerk on the steps of the fountain of knowledge, and you don't expect it, and your hat falls over your eyes and blinds you to the beauty of the falling water.* It can scarcely be called art, that all too easy process of evading directness. *Poeta nascitur, non fit*, but Henrik in a case of *poeta nascitur* a misfit. Why does he want his characters to tread material boards? They are not to be rendered by that large world of studied traditions called the "profession." I am not even sure they would be very interesting if personated by a cast of latter-day exponents bred to a wild freedom of interpretation. I have a sneaking fancy that they "go down," so far as they may at present, in that they are wrapped in a little cloak of mystery—and naughtiness. Ah, that broad-sounding noun, clipped so daintily by white teeth! It would draw Belgravia to Petticoat Lane while Shakespeare grew mouldy on the upper shelf. But Henrik is a poet like "Love-in-a-mist" (except in his portrait, as published at the beginning of a pretty little volume—a translation of his play, "The Lady from the Sea"—where he is more like a poodle), and poets are not practical dramatists. It has been so often proved that it is idle to insist upon it. He must be read to be appreciated at his proper value, for with all his prolixity the fellow drops something the spirit of the sagas of old from his pen, and, off the stage, his dramas will wash down comfortably with a bumper of pommard to lay the dust. Odin breathes through them, not with fire-pouring nostrils, but modernised to a capacity for hypnotism, and Thor wields the magnetic current in place of his long-out-of-date hammer.

Well, well, it is an age of doubt and restlessness, of test and experiment. The old art is being consigned piecemeal to the limbo of shadows, and there is none to replace it. Perhaps there will be some day. The Michael Angelo of the new era has yet to emerge from this blinding fog, and collect the fifty-thousand puppet-strings in the palm of his hand, and set the little fellows all a'dancing in time. We are only sorting the bricks for the building of the future temple. We are shuffling the cards that others must play. We see problems raised, not laid, and the air is full of ghosts.—

Yours distantly,

THE CALL-BOY.

P.S.—We have heard a good deal about School Board examination errors lately, Terence. What do you think of this for a private sample, guaranteed :—
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* An experience, Mr. Editor, suggested by the ladies—bless their whimsicalities! Did you ever follow on the dainty heels of such out of a shop, store, whatnot, where steps led into the street—of course you did, though, before the olive branches were in bud—and not know them heave-to, suddenly, on the top step to look about them generally before descending, with an air that said plainly, "Here I am safe and sound. Has anything happened in my absence?" so that you, hard in chase, were stopped in your career with an abruptness that jerked your neckcloth out of its socket and bonnetted your Grecian nose incontinently?

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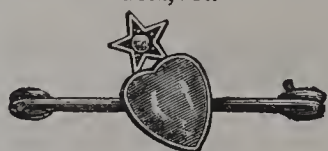
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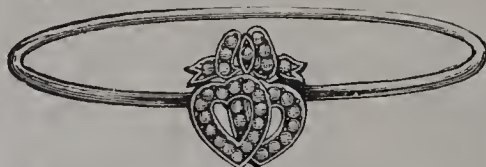
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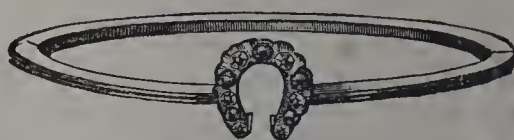
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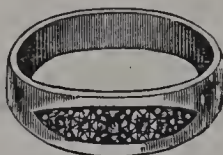
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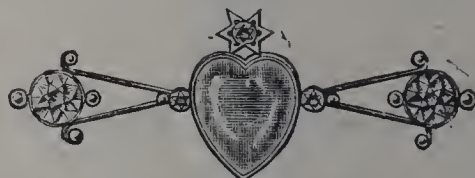
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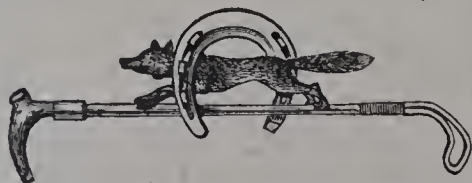
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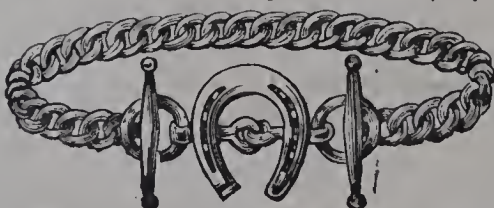
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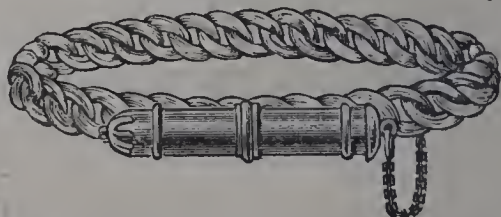


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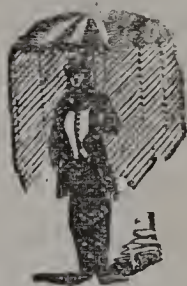
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THE THEATRE.



Pierre's Brother.

AN EPISODE.

BY ESME STUART.



YOU should have seen them gathering opposite the Mairie, some laughing and chattering, some speechless, some in tears. They were a motley crowd, but the new recruits were easily recognised; something in their faces told their story quite plainly.

Leaning against a statue of Peace, represented as a large woman carrying much fruit, but wearing little clothing, was a young man arm in arm with his mother. He had not drawn the *bon numéro*, so his fate was settled; moreover, having just been passed by the official doctor, his last chance of escape had failed. He pretended to her that he would rather be a soldier than anything else in the world, but his forced gaiety was not pleasant to behold. It was almost more enlivening to look at the pretty girl on the other side of Peace, who was sobbing her little heart away on her lover's shoulder.

"Will they take you, Michel? No, no, we can't spare you! What will your mother do without you, and Pierre, and—and—what shall I do?"

Pierre was just behind; he left Julie to do all the talking and the lamenting, and contented himself with keeping his eyes fixed on his brother.

As for Michel himself, he wore a resigned, hopeless look, but kept Julie's hand in his, and squeezed it till she felt the pain. The young man was a born artist, he hated war and the sound of guns, he was utterly ignorant of drills and regulations, and had never known the pangs of hunger, and some of the by-standers were at this moment telling ugly stories of the soldier's daily fare.

Pierre and Michel were the only two children of Madame Roux. Their great affection for each other was the talk of the '*pays*' down at Joinville on the Marne. The father was a poor weak-minded fellow whose name was over a small chemist shop, but it was Pierre and Madame Roux who managed everything whilst M. Roux read the '*Petit Journal*.' The end and object of the careful management was Michel. Michel must have enough money in order to follow the profession he loved. Money was wanted to pay for his lodging at Paris, for his food, for the high premium to the famous Monsieur R——, the sculptor out there by the Rue de l'Université. Pierre understood his brother's artistic feelings thoroughly, he knew that Michel only began to live when he and the hard stone came in contact with each other.

Quite in private, Madame Roux told Pierre that that wicked Paris would spoil Michel.

"I know what it is when those young artists get together, Pierre; they begin by forgetting their mothers, and then they take to drinking absinthe, and then—and then—they call that art. I fear we have done unwisely by letting Michel become a sculptor."

Pierre laughingly kissed his mother on both cheeks as he answered:—

"What nonsense, mère. Can you imagine our Michel anything but our Michel? You can't spoil him, Paris can't, nothing can. Why his heart is like the big stones he hacks away at. You may break them, but each chip would remain hard and sound."

"He'll forget Julie," answered Madame Roux. Foiled on one side, she tried another. Julie and Michel had just found out they loved each other.

"Michel never forgets," said Pierre; then pretending to be angry, he added, "but it is hard on the poor fellow when his own mother turns against him."

After this Pierre had his own way, and the requisite money was scraped together to carry on his brother's art education, and it was quite enough reward for Pierre to sit and listen to Michel's experiences when this latter returned home each Saturday night. Of course, they all discussed the famous future group which was to make Michel's world-wide reputation. The artist modestly suggested the Tuileries as a likely destination, but Pierre was for putting it at once in the Louvre, whilst Julie decided it would be better placed in the '*pays*' where their neighbours might see it. The neighbours were more to Julie than all the great Paris artists, for she can see the summit of her own familiar hill, but not that of the neighbouring mountain.

All this is retrospect, and what can be more foolish than looking back? The country wanted men; men to act as sentinels to keep the ramparts, men to kill and to be killed; it cared nothing about the men who carved out noble ideas in stone. Pshaw! could sculptors subdue the pride of neighbouring Kings and Emperors, could noble ideas win or take an inch of land? Of course not. Michel's country

wanted his body, not his mind ; it wanted his arms to carry a gun, and his legs to tramp, tramp, and in return it was willing to give him barely enough to feed that body, but plenty of music to drown his march towards Death, and it is easier to die if you have the sound of music in your ears.

The time came for Michel to draw a number. Pierre went with him arm in arm and said cheerfully :

"You are so lucky, Michel, you are sure to draw the good number." In his secret heart Pierre was raging and crying out, "The nation shall not have our Michel, we can't spare him !"

But Michel did not draw the *bon numéro*.

"Look here, mère," said Pierre on his return, "one brother can give himself for the other. I'll go instead of Michel."

"You, Pierre ! you are so short-sighted, you can see only just what is close by your nose ; you would shoot your own corporal," said Madame Roux, sobbing.

"I'll cheat them. They shan't find it out. They must take me instead of Michel. I can bear hardships, he can't, he has the artist spirit."

But Pierre did not cheat the authorities. He stumbled over a bench right in front of the corporal, and it was all up with him. They called him a "*vieux imbécile*," so he went home with lips tightly closed.

There was yet one more chance for Michel—he might not pass the doctor's final examination.

The officials were very rough and ready to-day. They hated sentiment ; all these outcries and tears of mothers and sweethearts were not in the book of official red-tapism.

"Number 1909 ! come, make haste !"

Michel loosed Julie's little hand and walked up the flight of white steps.

"Courage, Michel," whispered Pierre, "you don't look strong ; that *vieux coquin* won't pass you."

But he did pass Michel, so Pierre spent that night in raging against the nation which was going to send his Michel, his genius, to herd among low fellows, who would use him roughly and feed him badly, and teach him what he did not want to know instead of letting him work out the beautiful ideas that crowded his mind.

It is useless to describe such partings ; why explain the approach of Nemesis ?

"They who venerate Adrastea are wise," but Pierre was not wise, for he hated Fate ; he would have been delighted to seize her, to throttle her, or even to have propitiated her if only she would have spared Michel.

But Adrastea did not spare him, and Pierre and Julie and Madame Roux saw him go off, and they stayed at home and gnawed their hearts ; but they were not exceptions, and unless you are an exception nobody pities you.

Thus Michel Roux's artistic page was turned over, and on the next

one he had to spell out a hard lesson. "They shall not know at home," he said to himself, with that strong determination which some natures can produce on the right occasion; and when his persecutors gave him a little respite he took up a pen and wrote a cheerful letter to Pierre, and very tender words to Julie, and some playful moralizings to his mother.

After a lapse of time Michel's regiment was drafted down to Vincennes. He had been on out-post duty there and realised how pleasant it is to spend bitterly cold nights looking out for an imaginary enemy. But try hard as he might, he could not prevent himself being haunted with visions. Visions are worse than cold and hunger. Michel in these visions often saw the beloved studio, he heard the blows of the hammer, worse still, he distinctly beheld the future group rise in noble perfection from the pure block marble, and only a born artist can realise the pain the poor fellow experienced when recalled from these visions to his present hateful duties.

Another vision he had which was as bad, if not worse. He saw Julie waiting for him, waiting for the kisses that had been exquisite joy, waiting, and then getting tired of waiting. When he reached this strain of thought, his heart seemed to give a grip to all his being.

This vision was followed by another. Suppose his mother or Pierre should die before his return? Good God! he had never told them all he felt, he had never expressed to them his intense love and gratitude for all their noble self denial, and perhaps he himself might moulder away in some damp ditch without having been able to let them know his feelings.

These visions were running their cheerful course one evening whilst he was on guard, when he was suddenly roused by hearing the sound of footsteps.

"*Qui vive?*" he cried, glad he had returned from Vision-land in time.

No answer.

Michel shouldered his gun and peered into the darkness.

All the directions in his hated book of regulations rushed pell mell into his head. 'You must ask for the password and repeat the counterpass, and you must offer to fire if the intruder advances, and if he still advances you must take aim. One, two—then the enemy's last chance, and you fire.'

In spite of noble artistic thoughts, poor Michel was only a very raw recruit. Receiving no answer to his "*Qui vive*," he proceeded to the *mot d'ordre*. Again no answer; then he got cross.

"*Vieux coquins!*" he muttered; speak, or I fire.

But just then a small portion of moon peered out in a kind of wicked way from a bank of dark cloud, and Michel saw that the intruders were his commanding officer and the general of the division.

"Hang them," he thought. "The instructions don't tell you to fire on the general of your division," and he turned his back; but the next moment he was disgusted to hear smothered laughter as the steps passed him by.

He could almost have killed himself a minute afterwards, for the officer turned back and chaffed him.

"Ah, ça, Michel ; it's you, is it ? If you had fired, *mon brave*, the general would have decorated you to-morrow. These new recruits will think for themselves, instead of obeying orders. I'll report you to the corporal to-morrow, and he'll teach you to think for yourself."

Michel had no more visions that night. Why hadn't he obeyed orders ? They are simple, too, in this respect ; if you don't get the *mot d'ordre*, you fire. That is all.

That episode made a strong impression on Michel, but, worse luck, he took care not to mention it in his letters home. He even now began to take a slight interest in his duties, but he still raged over the general of his division. For him to have been decorated would have pleased Pierre and his mother so much, and Julie would have thought him such a great hero. He actually began to study more attentively that, to new recruits, cheerful little book, which gives the long list of crimes and misdemeanours for which a soldier suffers either fines, imprisonment, or death.

Curiously enough Michel was a favourite with the commanding officer, and when the regiment came to Vincennes, he was allowed a day's leave.

From Vincennes to Joinville is not far, and Michel once out of sight of his camp took to his heels. He wanted to give the home people a surprise.

Surprises are not always successful, and this one proved very nearly a failure ; for having taken a short cut, Michel found himself suddenly in sight of the gardens at the back of Julie's house. His heart seemed to leap into his mouth when he saw Julie sitting on a garden bench, and close beside her, with his arm round her, was Pierre.

Michel remembered his vision. Julie had got tired of waiting for him—but that it should be Pierre ! . . . A sudden sweep of passion and blind jealousy seized him, for the artistic nature is easily fired. For a moment he stood rooted to the spot, and determined to go back to camp, but at this instant Pierre turned his head and saw him. With one cry of joy he and Julie were by his side, and nearly smothered him. The look of love and devotion in Pierre's eyes was too strong to be doubted, even by a lover.

"He was telling me you would soon come back, Michel," sobbed Julie, without explanation. This was true, but the assurance had been preceded by a gentle reproach. A certain fine officer had made eyes at Julie. It was only a harmless flirtation on her side, but in Pierre's eyes even this was an insult to his Michel.

So everything ended happily, and Michel drank in enough love to supply thousands of visions.

Madame Roux laughed and wept alternately, and even Père Roux put down the *Petit Journal* to talk to his soldier son.

It is love that makes the world go round, and so Michel's world spun very fast indeed when he sadly returned to his hateful work.

"It will kill me in time," he muttered to himself; but, honestly, it takes some time to kill a raw recruit, even if his heart is elsewhere.

"Look here, Julie," said Pierre the next day, "Michel gave us a surprise, didn't he? He has learnt cunning among those red-legs; see if I don't surprise him some day? You'll give me a lock of your hair to take to him, won't you?"

Julie nodded her head, and was delighted. She even whispered, "I'll never even look at that officer again."

Pierre was satisfied, for he meant to guard Michel's property jealously during his absence.

That little surprise visit didn't take place just then, for war was declared soon afterwards, and the regiments were hurried away, and changed and transferred and ordered hither and thither. There was no chance now of Michel's return, but much chance of many broken hearts.

Pierre lived in a nightmare, but all the time he faithfully saw after the drugs and kept up Julie's spirits.

Everyone knows the history of the war. It has lost its freshness, for it is a stale old story, but in spite of this some of its episodes even now interest us.

For instance, the episode of Pierre's surprise visit to his brother.

It happened that during the upheaval of events Michel's regiment was once more drafted to Vincennes. The Prussians were approaching that way; the peaceful folk were beginning to take flight, leaving their homes ready for one side or the other to take possession of.

Pierre settled the question of flight very decidedly.

"We must not leave home, mother. Michel may come back; he may be wounded; he shall find us here."

So they stayed, but Julie and her people thought differently, and Pierre helped them to pack up, and made Julie swear—yes, actually swear—that she would be true to Michel. He made her cut off the promised lock so that some day Michel might have it.

"How he will kiss it, Julie!"

Julie cried; but she was so mortally afraid of the Prussians that she was glad to go. If she had only stayed one day longer! for actually the next day Pierre heard Michel was stationed close by.

Now was the time for the return visit. Pierre told no one, but took Julie's lock of hair and started off. It was a cold, dark night, but that did not matter, he had an abundance of love to keep him warm. His informant had told him where Michel was posted, and as he trudged on his heart seemed bursting with expectancy. He was going to see his Michel.

On his side Michel, that very evening, was trying to think how he could let Pierre know of his arrival. But were the home people still in the old house, or had they fled? Patriotism had done much for Michel. He would not now have gone back to the sculptor's studio if he could; he loved his country so passionately that he was ready to give up everything for her, except Julie and his dear ones. No fear to-night of his not being found watching.

Hark ! what was that ? His post was an important one ; behind him lay the powder magazine, and spies were inordinately dreaded.

"*Qui vive ?*" No answer. It was a pitch-black night. He crept a few steps forward, and the remembrance of that other "*Qui vive*" suddenly flashed into his mind. The commanding officer was too busy now to play at surprises. All at once a gust of wind rose and heaved a long, mournful sigh, but unfortunately it carried the soft whistle of an old, familiar tune away with it.

"It is Michel's voice," Pierre thought, "and he does not know my whistle. I'll surprise him in good earnest."

Another step forward. This time Michel was on the alert.

"*Le mot d'ordre*, or I fire !"

Pierre was bursting with laughter, but he suppressed it. Two more steps forward, but, alas ! not preceded, but followed by the cry of "*C'est moi, Michel !*"

Those three words were drowned in a short, sharp report. There was a cry from the next sentry, there were hurrying footsteps, and Michel rushed forward, thinking "This time they will decorate me."

"*Sacré bleu !* it's a spy," said a soldier who held a lantern. "*Bien fait, mon brave.*"

"A spy, and not a Prussian !" said Michel.

The aim had been excellent ; the man was on the ground, but he moved. He opened his eyes as Michel peered down. What an awful cry can proceed from a man's lips !

"Good God ! it is my brother. It is Pierre !"

Pierre smiled, yes, smiled. He tried to speak ; he wanted to say something. He moved his hand ; it contained Julie's lock of hair wrapped in silver paper, and it fell at Michel's feet as he threw himself on the ground.

"Pierre ! you're not hurt ?" he said, supporting his brother's head.

"No . . . Michel . . . your duty . . . Julie . . . ah !"

It was over—an episode of the war.

* * * * *

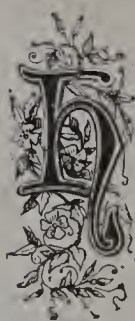
If you mention Michel Roux's name down there in the '*pays*' they slur over that episode, but they tell you a good deal about the storming of a certain fort by the Prussians, and how Roux, with three other men, stayed to the end against ridiculous odds and under a hot fire. He did not save the fort, but they say his holding out allowed the rest of the regiment to retreat and prevented them from being cut off. When he had crawled away, terribly wounded, to a place of safety, they decorated him on the field of battle ; but that night he died of his injuries ; and "Pierre" was the last word he uttered.

Ah, well, Roux was brave ; but so were many others. His story is an episode, nothing more.



The Last Kiss.

BY CLEMENT SCOTT.



HAVE you forgotten? My heart! My heart!
That night when the lilies were bathed in dew,
For we met as lovers, nor dreamed to part,
And the world had never a rose like you!
There was never a star in the skies above
As true as the light in those eyes of thine,
To us alone had been granted love,
For my life was yours and your soul was mine.

The lily is dead, and the rose in tears,
And the garden cold where we loved and sat,
But whatever may happen in after years
There was never a kiss like that.

Can't you remember? You must! You must!
Your last sweet words when alone we stood;
Your eyes said wait and your lips meant trust,
And you left me there in the darkened wood.
The days pass on and the years roll by,
And the leaf is hidden with winter's snow,
We meet and part and you ask me why?
Well, I loved you once, and the rest you know.

The lily and rose are entwined with yew,
And the garden waste where we loved and sat,
But in after years we shall own it's true,
Whatever may happen to me or you,
There was never a kiss like that.



My Holiday.

BY F. BERNARD-BEERE.

(Continued.)



LES was our next stoppage, calling at Molde on our way for letters. Molde looked a very pretty place, and we wanted to stop, but were carried on to the land of carriages. As far as the pleasure of carriage-driving goes, to me the anticipation is the best part of it. I'm not good at describing anything on wheels, but I can give you a fairly good idea of a carriage by asking you to imagine a coal-scuttle (an old-fashioned one) turned upside down. The little ledge behind, which in civilized parts would be the seat for a neat little groom, is here given up to the pony's food, contained in a sack and fixed to the cart by means of a strap caught round the middle. This sways to every movement, and is neither elegant nor pretty viewing the equipage from behind. A piece of rope does service for reins, and the luxury of a whip depends on the advanced ideas or affluence of the owner of the carriage. The morning of the day we had chosen for our drive the kindly purser had ordered two of the carts to be in waiting for us before the principal hotel, where we found them on our arrival. We soon got "fixed," and started for the Romsdal Valley, each accompanied by the respective owners of the carriages—*my* guide a most murderous looking villain. The ponies trotted quietly along, really wanting no guidance. The path being narrow, we went in single file. The country was most beautiful; to our left mountains, reaching, as it seemed, to the sky, capped with soft, grey clouds, and covered here and there with glistening snow fields; to our right, fields of corn ready cut and sheathed, broken by narrow stretches of running water, bubbling and foaming over mossy boulders, looking in parts very good for fish. The sun poured down hot and strong, and, probably, like their masters, the ponies grew thirsty. We stopped to give them water, and the guides got down, following after on foot. Delighted at the thought of going faster, we imitated the cooing noise of the men, and started our ponies off into a good sharp canter. We met lots of carriages on their return journey, the occupants looking surprised, seeing us thus unattended. We bumped along, sometimes down in a ditch, then over funny little bridges, with a ledge about an inch in height to keep us from the water; then through a very narrow lane, the trees meeting overhead, and a pile of stones at the end which introduced us somewhat suddenly to the first "station," where we found a lot of our friends resting *and* refreshing.

After a stay of ten minutes, we turned to go back, on the watch for our men, who soon appeared, looking by no means pleasant, their faces distorted with rage, and their arms whirling like mill-wheels. Their language—well, I then felt the blessings of ignorance. They led the ponies to the side, growling and shaking their fists in our faces while they unharnessed them, leaving us facing each other, perched up high in the uncomfortable little seats, the shafts resting on the ground. Because we looked, as we felt, helpless, the men became abusive—at least, so I gathered from their gestures, some really *very* expressive. My temper, which had been rising, was not proof against this, and in a polyglot of German, French, and stray words of any other language that came to me, I ordered them to reharness the ponies. I don't know what my manner conveyed to them, but they commenced putting us to rights. As we started, my murderous-looking charioteer, who, like the old man of the sea, had installed himself at my back on the pony's food, snatched the rope, alias reins, from me with an ominous growl. My last trace of amiability vanished, and snatching them back, I am ashamed to say I gave him a good thrashing. The instincts of the gentleman were cowardly, for he took his beating very quietly, and although his expression was a little more villainous, he left me in peace the rest of the journey. Before my drive came to an end, I saw a man pitched head-foremost out of a carriage. Luckily for him, he fell on turf, and was soon back in his seat, trying to look unconcerned and as though he had done this merely to relieve the monotony of the drive. Hungry, we alighted at the hotel we started from, and found the landlord, an exceedingly fat, disagreeable little man, lolling against the door. He didn't seem to mind whether we had anything to eat or not, and very rudely told me that if I didn't care to wait for his luncheon time and take what he had, I could go without. I *did* go without as far as that gentleman was concerned, for piling my rugs on the first boy to hand, my companion and I made our way back to the yacht as quickly as possible. We were greeted with exclamations of surprise and commiseration on our friends learning our foodless condition; but that was soon remedied, the cook kindly preparing us a nice little lunch. I regained my cheerfulness by pistol-shooting in the smoking room, and scored heaviest. After half-an-hour I felt tired and went to my cabin for a rest, but failed miserably, for a gentleman just over my head regaled the idlers with selections on the banjo, the audience, to a man, beating time with their feet. The steward who was "tidying up," showed his contempt strongly for the ping-a-ponging, and remarked with a very wise and oracle-like expression "they're all very lively *now*; just wait till we're a little way out to-night, they'll all be crying out for mother's back-yard." This man was really a delightful character, and according to *his* account, had been, like my mysterious sailor, everywhere and everything. He was devoted to my comfort, and if I had taken a quarter of the delicacies he suggested to me, in the fulness of his heart, I should not be alive now. We spent some

pleasant hours fishing, one of my hauls being a huge fish that aroused great interest amongst my boat companions. The inhabitants of Naes live entirely on fish, tasting meat about three times in the year, which accounts, perhaps, for their extreme pallor. I was told that leprosy was quite common with them, and was asked to visit the hospitals, but I had no wish to do so, knowing what a terrible haunting sight it is. The next fjord, of which I have forgotten the name, was remarkable for the number of waterfalls, rushing and sparkling down the mountains. When the sun shone full on them, I cannot imagine a lovelier sight. Nature was very obliging, for she spread a lovely opal-tinted rainbow over the hills. I watched it until the brilliant colours faded out. The nights were, with one or two exceptions, quite warm, and the dark blue starry sky, with a soft breeze smelling of pine, gently blowing, and the sound of the water gurgling and splashing against the side, made it quite idyllic. My views weren't everybody's views, however, for a genial, rather stout gentleman, who was a great favourite with everyone, was constantly heard making plaintive appeals to someone's good heart to take him out in a little boat for a puff of fresh air, "if such a thing is to be had, in these stuffy Norwegian fjords."

On our return from the North Sea we were greeted with a delightful calm, and in answer to the many anxious enquiries, a smooth, easy passage was prognosticated, but again my steward came to the fore. Shaking his head wisely, he said, peeping through the port-hole:—

"They may tell you Madam, what they like. I tell you that the smooth sea and quiet sky is a 'fox,' and in an hour or two we shall have what we call in France a '*bun breeze*.'

Unfortunately he was right, and his "bun breeze" proved very disastrous. A darkness suddenly coming on took us out of our way, and we had a very bad two days and a half.

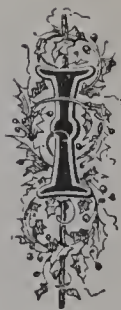
I tried lunch in the saloon the first day, but the sight of the fiddles on the tables and the faces of the courageous few decided me to keep in my cabin until we were once more in smooth water. We arrived at Tilbury somewhere about ten in the evening. The night was so dark that the Captain thought it better to land his passengers the following morning, so intimated that we might make ourselves comfortable for the night; but being within short distance from London, I was mad to get off. Every obstacle was put in my way—no boats to be had, mustn't take my luggage as it was long past the hour for the customs officers, &c., &c. But once having the idea in my head, I felt I couldn't rest on board. "Where there's a will there's a way." After a good deal of trouble a boat was found, my luggage left in charge of a gentleman and his sister, who kindly offered to see that it reached London safely, and with my friend and a few more restless spirits we left the yacht, reaching the landing stage after a few rapid strokes through the inky water, and a clamber up a very risky rope ladder. After a cold three quarters of an hour

in the train, we were landed at Fenchurch Street Station, and, everybody for themselves, we got out of the station as quickly as possible, leaving our "good-bye's" for some future time. I trusted to my friend to pioneer me, and of course we went out by a wrong door, and found ourselves in a deserted dreary slum, with barely a light, and no cabs to be seen. We were horribly nervous, and the passing cab which picked us up at last appeared like a lovely vision. At a quarter to one I was ringing my own bell. The sight of me greatly astonished my servants, who seeing no luggage, had wild thoughts of shipwreck; but I was too tired to explain anything, and longed for the luxury of a bed that stood still. As I fell asleep my only thought was that it was well worth enduring rough seas and *mauvais quarts d'heures* to return to the bed I left behind me.



"Little Mother."

BY JESSIE BOND.



IN that part of London which lies between the Euston Road on the north and Holborn on the south, and between Gray's Inn and Tottenham Court Roads on the east and west, boarding-houses abound, if they do not all flourish. Not a few of those who avail themselves of the not unrewarded hospitality proffered, are members of the theatrical profession. I do not, of course, suggest that many of its celebrities are there to be found, nor even any number of those in the second rank; neither do I include others who are sometimes by journalistic courtesy dubbed actors and actresses, if they omit, which is rare, so to style themselves, but who are better known and perhaps not less accurately described as "supers." These, especially the male portion, engaged during the day in some employment wholly unconnected with wig-paste and rouge, live far away from a quarter of Bohemia more particularly affected by possible future Kembles, Siddonses, Pattis, and Marios, who, at present, have hardly arrived within measureable distance of that goal. It is not difficult to understand the reason of this segregation of as yet unrecognized vocalistic and histrionic talent, for highly respectable boarding-houses and quiet lodgings are plentiful, on terms in reasonably fair proportion to the limited incomes of the inhabitants; further, the majority of the principal theatres are within walking distance.

It was in one of these modern caravansaries that, for the above reasons, I took up my abode when I made my first appearance on the stage, and I found myself fairly comfortable, more so perhaps than I had any right to expect. My fellow boarders were to me as unobjectionable as I hope I was to them. They comprised, of course, the usual unappreciated impecunious artist, the ever-green widow with peroxide of hydrogen auburn tresses and jet-black eyebrows, the two young men from the city, the retired East Indian warrior, and the Rev. Something Somebody, who had not been educated at Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin, or apparently anywhere else. With one or two others, less noticeable, these constituted Mrs. Blank's much advertised family circle.

I never quite understood where the family circle came in, as the nominal master of the establishment seldom appeared, and it was currently reported that his entire energies were devoted to blacking the circle's boots and shoes, varied by occasionally tallying, from within the area gate, the sacks of coal in course of delivery, whilst his eminently superior spouse checked the accuracy of his figures from the more commanding position afforded by the front dining-room window.

There were no children to be seen, nor any of the usual poor relations. I was therefore constrained to believe that the lady principal was all that remained of some prehistoric circle whose business was continued by the sole survivor, *i.e.*, herself.

Boarding-houses are all more or less alike, and in this particular one there was nothing to take it out of the normal Bloomsbury category. The artist flirted occasionally with the peroxide lady. I can answer for it he always did so on Sunday. The Rev. S. S. now and then mistook the E. I. Captain's madeira for his own toast-and-water, and the city youths disseminated a constant odour of nicotine and chemically cleaned clothes; but all were harmless and unobtrusive in their good-natured endeavours to be mutually polite and entertaining.

Except on Sundays, I rarely saw any of the boarders, my work taking me away about the hour they were returning to the circle's roof, and I was graciously permitted to make my breakfast hour considerably later than that which was *de rigueur* for the rest of our well-ordered establishment. I had a large sitting and bed-room combined at the top of the house, and I hired a piano; but I was dull and lonely, so that, after a few week's experience of Bloomsbury life, I made up my mind it did not suit me, and that some change was absolutely necessary as I found myself growing nervous and irritable.

Before, however, I could settle upon any plan, a new arrival caused me to completely abandon all idea of leaving. This new arrival was a young Brazilian who had been sent over to England, I suppose to learn our language. He was but thirteen years old, but tall for his age; thick, straight, black hair, a perfectly clear olive complexion without a vestige of colour, large deep brown eyes shaded by the longest lashes I have ever seen, small hands and feet, and the whitest

teeth imaginable. He already spoke a few words of English, and we soon became fast friends. From "Senhora Yassi" he was not long in calling me simply "Yassi," and proved the most devoted admirer I had yet known. I used to play and sing to him, and accompany him whilst he sang, in his still childish treble, the songs of his native land, quaint simple melodies, more often sad than gay. He would watch and wait for me each morning, meeting me half-way on the staircase and escorting me to the breakfast-room, and there try to anticipate my every wish and movement. He was my constant attendant in my daily walks, and although unable to accompany me each evening to the stage-door of the theatre where I was playing, or to fetch me home when the performance was over—the circle's dinner hour and the regulations as to bed-time rendering this impossible—he used to stay up in his little room until I returned, and when he heard me open the front door about midnight, he would steal softly downstairs in his slippers and sit with me whilst I hurried through the apology for supper which was left for me on the dining-room table. We had many long chats about his native country and his home in the province of Pernambuco, where his father was a sugar-planter, or, as he called him, a "Senhor do Engenho," and the owner of many slaves. He told me stories of Brazil, and how his father was a very fierce man, in Brazilian *muito brabo*. According to little Léon everything was *muito brabo* in those parts. The horses were all *muito brabo*, so were the fish, *piranas* I think he styled them. So were the *Sertanejos*, the true Brazilians, who lived far in the interior in the *Sertao*, the most lovely climate in the world, where no one was ever ill, and of whom some journeyed coastwards trading in cattle. These *Sertanejos*, he told me, were clothed in leather garments because of the spikes and thorns in their country, which spikes and thorns were exceptionally *muito brabo*.

He drew pictures, word pictures, of the virgin forests, the trees of which were so interlaced with long tough creepers, that to penetrate into them involved cutting a path every foot of the way; he told of swamps, and rattlesnakes, *muito brabo* the snakes, of humming-birds and toucans, of the wonderful plumage of everything that flies, of dresses made out of their feathers, of fire beetles that gave out sufficient light at night to enable anyone to see the time by a watch, and of many more and still greater wonders.

He tried hard to make me understand what an "Engenho" was like, with its great water-wheel, and all its machinery for crushing the sugar-cane and boiling the juice, and how sugar was made and *cachaça*.

He told me of his only sister, Umbellinda, a pretty girl, *muita bonita*, with hair as black as his own, but with large blue eyes like an English lady, and how she liked best to run about with bare feet, only putting on shoes to go out of doors, stockings being reserved entirely for fête days and Sundays.

The subject, however, to which he most constantly recurred was

his mother, of whom he was never tired of talking and of telling me how like I was to her, until in time he came to call me his “little mother ;” and so gradually dropping the “Yassi,” “little mother ” I become to him in that Bloomsbury boarding-house for ever afterwards.

One day he confided to me a plan he had formed to teach me Portuguese, with the avowed object of inducing me to return with him to Pernambuco whenever he should be called back. It was in vain I pointed out to him that perhaps his family would not receive the project so enthusiastically as he had conceived it, also that I could hardly hope to find any professional employment on his father’s plantation, and finally that I did not like very hot weather. The poor boy’s beautiful eyes filled with tears, and he seemed so distressed that, without further objection, I resigned myself to the Portuguese lessons, in which, however, I made but sorry progress, and even that was one day abruptly cut short by my accepting an engagement to go with a company to the United States.

Léon said but little when I broke the news to him.

“You will always be my little mother, Yassi dear, won’t you ?” was about all. He became if anything, somewhat reserved and silent, and made no further mention of the lessons in Portuguese, but he followed me about like my shadow.

On the morning of the day I was to leave, he brought me a little packet containing a dozen pocket-handkerchiefs with “Léon ” embroidered in the corner, which his mother had worked for him, and he asked me to take them so that I might every day see his name. I took one, and I have it still, just as he gave it to me ; it has never been unfolded.

When the hour of parting came, he brought me his photograph, put his arms round my neck and kissing me, as I felt his tears fall on my face, whispered only two words “Little Mother,” then he ran upstairs to his room, and I drove off to the station.

During my absence in the States, about ten months, but one letter from him reached me ; in it he wrote he had heard he was to return to Brazil very shortly, and he wanted so much and felt so sure he should see me before he left ; and then, *quien sabe* ; “Perhaps, after all, his little mother might go with him.” He wrote also of not feeling strong, and being very lonely, but said the “circle ” was kind to him.

When I at last returned home I found my own people staying in London, and, pending other arrangements, to them of course I went. Some little time elapsed before I thought of enquiring about Léon, who I fully believed was already in Brazil, but I settled I would call the following Sunday.

On the day preceding, just as the curtain had fallen on the last act of the *matinée* performance, word was brought to me by my dresser that a young woman, who had been waiting some considerable time, wished very much to speak to me as soon as possible, but she declined to tell her business to anyone but me. Scanning one of the then

usual stage-door appeals for assistance from more or less worthy applicants, generally less, I did not hurry my dressing.

As I passed out of the theatre, the woman, evidently a domestic servant, addressed me :

“ You don’t remember me, miss, I dare say. I am housemaid at Mrs. Blank’s where you boarded a year ago. The young gentleman, Master Léon, who was such a friend of yours, is very, very ill, and has been asking for you so often, saying he was sure you must have returned. To-day he is much worse, and the doctor thinks very badly of him. Will you come and see the poor boy as soon as you can? I am sure it would make him happier and quieter. I saw in the paper that you were playing again at this theatre, so I made bold to come myself and ask you.”

A Hansom cab soon took us to the old familiar house, and, followed by the maid, I hurried up the stairs to Léon’s room. Opening the door gently, I saw my little lover lying in his bed, his eyes closed and the long dark lashes looking darker than ever against the deathly pallor of his face. As I softly entered the room the doctor, who was standing at the foot of the bed, came forward to meet me, saying in a low tone—

“ I am afraid you are too late.” But even as he spoke there was a slight movement of Léon’s eyelids. “ Speak to him,” added he.

Leaning over the bed I said, almost in a whisper, “ Léon, dear.” Slowly the eyes opened, and as they met mine, the old wistful smile seemed to play over them. Then taking his poor thin hand in mine, I bent down until my face touched his, whilst from his lips came the last words he ever spoke :

“ Little mother.”

And as the eyelids again drooped and the smile vanished, the feeble grasp he had of my hand relaxed.

I spoke once again, but for response came only the sobs of the boarding-house servant, and the voice of the old doctor saying :

“ Come away now, my dear. He was right, you did return in time to make him quite happy.”







MISS ELLA BANISTER.

"We may roam through this world like a child at a feast."

—MOORE.

All Souls' Day.

"Lord ! keep my memory green."—DICKENS.



ORD, keep my memory green ! A blessèd prayer
When prayed by those before whose dying eyes
Is spread the future of the friends they prize,
And now are leaving ; when in vision fair,
Half dream, half prophecy, they see the years
Are rich with happiness, whose crowning grace
Lies in remembrance of that dear pale face,
Which now we're watching through our blinding tears.

Lord, keep my memory green ! A piteous prayer
When hovering on that unknown borderland,
And groping feebly for a well-loved hand,
They rouse to consciousness it is not there ;
When, stabbing through the sharpest, bitterest pain,
There comes the knowledge that the silenced breath
Will mean oblivion and completer death,
Since none will care to speak their name again.

Lord, keep their memory green ! these patient dead
Whose laurels we have wrested, waxing brave
Before their nerveless hold, on whose quiet grave
(May God forgive us !) we will sometimes tread
And make of it a stepping stone to fame,—
They ask so little at our hands, they lie
So wholly at our mercy, that no cry
Can tease us with a long-forgotten claim.

So of our loyalty on All Souls' Day
Shall we not think of them ? their laughter low,
Their little kindnesses of long ago ?
Shall we not linger in the Church, and pray
For those whose angels of the King are seen ?
So shall no wild regret for days gone by,
In the time coming, break our faltering cry
"Lord, of Thy mercy, keep our memory green !"

MABEL E. WOTTON.

Round-the-Fire Stories.

II.—*THE WHITE FACE.*

BY BEVIS CANE.



THROUGH the strange, brief narrative here set down I, for obvious reasons, suppress my name. That there are persons living who could testify to its truth I may not assert, inasmuch as the nameless horror it records was known but of three individuals to the end, and hereafter—its victim, myself, and the honest adherent who confessed it to me, and who is since dead. Nor should I now invite the sceptical, who are many-headed, to peer through this cautious thread of opening betwixt the near-closed shutters of that dark chamber of life which it refers to, were it not that by so doing I hope, vainly perhaps, to help stem with my straw the ghastly current of agnosticism on which modern thought seems like to float drowning into the rapids of utter despair. If this end be served, however moderately, I shall feel that I have not spoken in vain, and hence I consider it my duty to make public what is here set forth.

Can we conceive what we do not feel? It is hard to do so at any rate. The man who enjoys a farce jeers at his fellow mortal who cries over a melodrama. We are only sympathetic superficially, and under the crust of cultivation, in greater or less degree, each is possessed of thoughts and impulses as unaccountable to his fellows one by one as the Heavens are unaccountable to us all. The grain of sand is never repeated; the spirit of a man recognises no duplicate. How, then, if we do not know one another, can we *agree* in gauging the mysteries of the unknown. Believe me, the depths of being are not sounded yet.

* * * * *

One dark, still November evening, not so many seasons ago, I sat in my private room of a quiet hotel off the Strand, where I had put up upon my return home after a prolonged absence abroad.

In this by-water of the stream of traffic all outer sounds came to me subdued and uncertain, and the muffled roar of life, sweeping by but half a furlong distant, sang in my brain only with a mouthing murmur like that of a distant weir. Dense, still rain had fallen all day, and when it ceased with the approach of night, a steaming cloud of mist rose spectral from the earth and the drenched pavements, licking everything it touched with slime of moisture, and working into the heart and nerves with vague, uneasy alarms.

It was an evening on which the fancy was led by blurred paths,

like tracks over a dark common, to night pictures of cold, wet graves on hill-sides, and stealthy imagined forms running alongside of one in hollow country lanes, and a shining out of ghostly windows at sudden turns of the road where no house stood in God's daylight. It was an evening when the shadows thrown by the fire took an awful significance, when an unexpected call in the street without made one turn his head sharply and stare at the wall in panic, when all noises were so magnified that the knocking of one's own heart at his ribs sounded strange as the thump of passing rowlocks on a foggy river.

Undefinably I felt the influence of the depressing atmosphere as I sat, leaning my head upon my hand, in the firelight, a solitary man.

And this night of all others conception of my utter loneliness in the world had fallen upon me most wearily, for in an hour or two was I to receive the story of the blight that had withered my hopes in the hour of fruition, and was henceforward to darken my days with the disease that has no name.

I was one of two sons left orphaned some twenty years before the date of which I write. For my inheritance, let it suffice that, had I used it as I should, it would have procured me an honourable position in the ranks of the world's workers. That I failed to do so, those who could recall my name from the chaos of a past foolish generation of riot would be well able to testify. I ran through my ample means, in short, at white-heat of folly, and, when they were gone, awoke with a shock, like that of the familiar fall from a nightmare precipice, to a blank, dizzy realisation of my unhappy position. In this dilemma I was procured, beyond my deserts, by an old family friend—whom God give peace in his grave—a decent post in a mercantile house in Colombo. Thither I sailed forthwith, and there had I remained ever since, winning a slow path to success and final opulence, striving to redeem the past honestly, and that for a principal motive above all others.

In my early fever of dissipation the sole curb to restrain my impetuous career had been a loving one. Wife have I never had, or inclination to marry. Perhaps it is hard to kindle uxorious warmth in the ashes of a fire that has flared itself away in ignoble passions. Be that as it may, I have learned to strive towards a goal of ultimate independence for other reasons than the desire to settle comfortably down as a family man, and stew in my own juice of rich domesticity. I am forty-five and a bachelor, and likely to remain so.

No, my chief consideration in aiming at a position of wealthy independence was my elder brother, whom above all living interests I cherished in my heart.

As I knew him and loved him he was a grave, simple boy and man, with a natural proclivity for goodness, and a perfect confidence in the world's optimism. I had been the favourite of my mother, he of our father; and it is needless to say which parent showed the wiser discrimination.

Born to a gentle wisdom of soul, possessed of a happy receptive nature, he early won a way to all affections by his unassuming candour and a certain droll touch of *espièglerie* that is not unhabitual to minds of his sincere stamp. He deplored my wild courses, yet handled them with very tender remonstrance. I loved his honest righteousness, yet held it up to good-humoured ridicule. He was *alpha*, I *omega* in the alphabet of virtue ; but for all that we felt we were lovingly akin in the language of the heart.

His reading, his convictions, his character alike led him to regard the taking of Holy Orders as his natural vocation in life, and when I left England he was in earnest study with this end in view. How his aspirations came to nothing, and in so failing shadowed *my* after mind with a fearful dark mist of responsibility, it is the object of this narrative to imply.

Their is a strange weird characteristic of vice which those who explain away the latter as a mere sub-current of the unknown quantity called force leave, I think, out of their calculations. It is that curious moral warp, that cast in the mind's eye, that, as with a particular stamp of women who seem to derive fierce pleasure from maltreating what they love, tempts the habitual careless sinner to entice whom he reverences, perhaps his clean-souled bosom friend, down to his own low level of morality. Who shall expound the mystery thereof ? Who shall explain why we condemn what we wistfully admire, but cannot reach to ? The purest music cloy us ; the highest art gives us restless uneasy pain. It is as if these, striving towards their birthright of perfection, serve as a reproach to us, the sons of God who walked with the daughters of the earth. Perhaps thus are we taught our early presumption ; perhaps is the sweet history of Christ, coming for remedy of this, no fable, and the remorse which follows deliberate wrong-doing a factor in our redemption.

So, let it be confessed, that, dear as my brother was to me, I upon more than one occasion strove lightly and good humouredly to seduce him aside from that straight road of virtue his true soul travelled by, and crown him novitiate in the hot mysteries of vice that was foreign to his nature. The wicked careless seed bore no fruit in my time, but—Oh, God forgive me if it fell not upon stony ground, and in the course of the long seasons found its way into the inch of fertile soil that should show it forth in a pushing sprout, ugly as wolf's-bane !

I went abroad, and gradually finding cure of the canker of idleness in the pride that fosters independence, became a steady citizen of my new world, and finally a wealthy one. With my brother I for some time kept up an intermittent correspondence, full of affectionate sympathy on either side. Complicate business worries, and the estrangement that feeds on absence, in time, however, affected the regularity of our intercourse, until by degrees we communicated with one another scarce oftener than once a year or thereabouts. This lapse was by no means due to a falling-off in mutual affection, but rather to the natural circumstances that, year by year, widened the gap between us in the matter of common interests. I, at least, never

abated my early feelings towards him by a single thought, and I have no reason but to think that his sentiments were identical with mine. Wife or children I had not, or tie to bind me apart from him, and through my career and to the end it was my most cherished hope to ultimately win a way to fortune that should secure us both in an affluent later life.

And at length the hour and the means had come, and, sighing a great sigh for home, I sailed, a sober middle-aged man, for the land I had left eighteen years before and never visited since. I had but barely outlined my success and my intentions to my brother by letter, and looked forward like a child to the happy outcome of my stratagem, when I should face him of a sudden, and tell him that the black sheep had returned at last to bless him for the past, and ease him of his long years of drudgery with the half of his well-loaded purse.

I say "drudgery," for I had understood from him that, when, some four or five years after my flight, he abandoned his intention of entering the church, he had invested his modest means in a finishing school for boys, wherein he had laboured and striven, gaining little material profit, during the whole weary period of our separation.

And so I landed on the shores of dear England once more, and there the news awaited me that he had died some two months previously, and that in all the wide world I was a lonely man, without kith or kin to welcome me.

That the blow was a terrible one I need not assert, nor is it my intention to dilate upon my individual misery thereat. Let me rather hasten to the circumstances attending his later life and his death, which were made known to me by one who had been his faithful servant throughout the long years that had separated us.

To this honest factotum, a whilom butler of my father's and a good friend of my own youth, I had written upon my arrival in England, under seal of secrecy, purposing to win his confederacy in the ambush of surprise I designed that my brother should walk into. In due course I received his answer—the sorrowful death-warrant of my hopes. That, as I have said, I will not dwell upon. The dead take with them from those who survive other than the obolus for passage across the shadowy river. Love and bitter yearnings and unfulfilled promise must wail like homeless children about their feet to delay their lonely journey.

When I first received the letter, I sat like one stunned—like one who, essaying to cross an arm of desert, finds that he has wandered afield and lost himself in its hideous wastes. But, with return of wretched reason, came a strange, weird breath of awe. There had been something, unnoticed definitely in the first shock of news, that had chilled my soul as if with a wintry sigh in perusal of the old man's few written words. He had asked me not to seek my brother's grave, to let the cloud of death that had mercifully blotted out his toiling life earn its own dissolution of forgetfulness, nor be profaned

by endeavour of mortal man to penetrate its mysteries. For recountal of all circumstances attending the close of that loved existence, he said he would, with my permission, wait upon me in my London hotel; and he ended his simple letter with the strange words, "Deeds that are done in darkness must in God's good time come to light."

And so, paralysed of will by sorrow, I submitted to fate, and, expectant of his coming, sat mournful in my homeless room that chill November evening.

* * * * *

What was it! What had happened! In a moment I was on my feet, breathing like a thing demented, and clutching frantically at the back of the chair I had risen from.

The room had sunk into deep shadow, the fire had contracted like a scar to one orange spark,—there seemed a voiceless ringing in the dead air, like the reverberation of cry from dreamland.

I must have fallen asleep—but, what then! My forehead was clammy, the blood had sucked away from the surface of my skin. And yet I had dreamed no dream, had imagined no horror, unless a fixed luminous blur, hanging suspended as it were in the darkness above my eyes, had terrified me, as such things will in sleep. It had been slowly coming down now, I remember, and I had had a convulsive dread of what should be revealed in its nearer approach, and had struggled madly and leaped into consciousness, as it seemed to be resolving itself into some half-remembered shape.

With an effort to shake off the incubus that crouched upon my heart like a night-mare, I groped my way to the bell, and rang for lights. Awaiting them, I sat in a flurry of expectation, stealthily glancing here and there to points in the room, where the dull light from street-lamps without fell through chink of blind upon vase or picture-frame or an edge of the marble mantle-shelf in a lance of light. I was glad, I own, when the gleam and flash of candles struck through the passage leading to my room; but, looking round after the waiter had placed them on my table and gone, my heart gave a suffocating leap into my throat as I saw a white-haired figure standing, intent upon my face, in the circle of their friendly glow.

The next moment, however, I uttered a sudden glad exclamation, and hurried forward in quick welcome.

"Jasper, my good old friend! I am truly glad to see you!"

There was a shine of moisture on the old man's puckered eyelids as he returned the pressure of my eager clasp.

"Master Rollo, master Rollo," he said in a thin trembling voice, "this is as fair a moment for me as aught I can know now, sir."

He lifted one of the candles, and held it flickering close to my face.

"Aye," he said softly; "here's the boy as broke bounds, and run as wild as his own rough Shetland pony."

A faint little smile creased the corners of his mouth. I think there was a suspicion of tears in both our eyes. Then of a sudden

he put back the candle softly on the table, and seemed to relapse from thought of me in the act.

"Good Jasper," I said quietly; you remember me in my foolish youth—you know me as I figure in my reformation, a grave, not unremembering man of business, a little sad, perhaps, but hitherto patient and cheerful in the light of a certain hope."

He peered at me curiously, motioning with his hand once more towards the light, as if he would have examined my face anew.

"Let us waste no time in idle personal reminiscences," I said, very softly; "you have other things to tell me."

Again the old man looked up, and examined my face without speaking. Beyond the subdued murmur of the sodden streets, no sound broke the stillness but the hollow drip of a gutter-pipe somewhere without the window.

"Jasper," I said, breathing quickly, "for years my hopes, my thoughts, my efforts have been concentrated on one triumphant object, have been concentrated only to fall dead in the very hour of realisation. My dear brother—what have you to tell me about him? What has been his life? What miserable fatality has removed him from me at the eleventh hour?"

I spoke with great emotion, and in the dead pause that succeeded my words, pressed my hand upon my heart in dumb appeal. The old man never moved from his position, but the dull, dark eyes under his fringe of silvery hair lightened up with a strange pathetic fire, and fixed themselves upon mine. Then of a sudden he stole to the door, examined and bolted it, took stealthy stock of every wavering shadow in the room, and stepping softly back to his former place by the table, once more fixed his curious gaze upon my face.

"What voice was that?" he said in a husky whisper.

He seemed to listen a moment, then all at once woke up to vivid realisation of my presence.

"I know you!" he cried, in a quavering under-treble. "Who so rememberable as young Rollo?"

His thin tones sank, and he advanced and seized my hand in his nervous fluttering fingers.

"Sir," he whispered piercingly, "you have come too late. He is gone where none shall question his right to be seen of all who pity the repentant; where the wicked horrors of night are dispelled in the shining flame that comes from God's dear throne!"

My heart beat oddly. I felt the shiver of a starting perspiration on my skin.

"Jasper," I said, "What is all this? My one brother's name was a synonym of goodness. Yet you refer to his memory strangely. What mystery, by the token of our mutual love, attaches to his life?"

"Sir," he answered quietly, "I, too, loved him, as my faithful service of eighteen year may stand in proof. Well, well, let that pass. He knows the truth where he has gone, and maybe it won't be long before I follow him."

I looked at him long and earnestly. The rumble of a passing waggon shook the room. As the reverberation died away, I advanced and placed a trembling hand on the old man's shoulder.

"Tell me," I said, "what is it? Why have you appointed to meet me here? What secret weighs at your heart?"

His eyes sought mine hurriedly, then dropped, and he spoke, and to the end I let him wander on without interruption; but with what varying emotions of pity and awful fear, those who read this story may guess, shuddering.

"Who first sowed the seeds of corruption in his young soul?" he began in wild cadence, but immediately his voice dropped, and hereafter he spoke in a patient, still tone of grief.

"He was happy in his simple God-fearing life, and temptation might have passed him by, seein' he courted none of it. Temptation, say I? Who can tell? He was ever the same kind, gentle soul to me and all, and if he came to have a dark, locked chamber in his breast that none might open, he was never the architect of it in the first instance—I swear it. Let such as were, look to their immortal souls!

"Sir, there are awful things on the nether side of sin. There are punishments it is better not to speak about, or think of, or try to imagine. I'm a crass old body, Master Rollo, and little more witting than a loon; but believe me, sir, I've learned this lesson in my weary day, that it isn't the customed liar, and thief, and fornicator that feels the weight of God's arm to the full, so much as him that has known righteousness, and knowing, defiled his soul meaningly.

"Sir, I loved your brother and believed in him, and when that befell that marked him a doomed man, and when his wits lay all amort, I tried to prove it in my faithful service, and cherished his trouble in my heart, for all I feared Heaven the more.

"You know how he fared to become a parson, and you heard how, after your going, he thought the better or worse of it, and instead sunk his portion in the school. I have no meaning but to pass over this time, sir. He were a quick, quiet master, and his boys were fond of him, as was every creature that came into touch with him. If he was altered in any secret way from the gentle soul you was fond of sporting with, though never, you'll say, with evil intent, he didn't show it on the surface.

"So things went on for nine year or more."

Abruptly at this point the low monotonous speech of the old man broke off, and for a full minute he was quite still, lost, it seemed, in profound mental retrospection. Yearning as I was to hear him to the end, I would not venture to disturb his reverie, inasmuch as a reverence begotten of awe and dark sense of mystery kept me dumb.

Suddenly a clock chimed the hour loudly through the silent house, and he started and came to the surface of his thoughts, and spoke once more.

"He were right to take a long holiday, for he had laboured hard and truly for nine year, and his system worked well, if it brought little profit to his purse. Never had he failed in his trust, never allowed himself rest. His boys were his care, body and soul, a care that he wouldn't divide with so much as a wife, and if now and again I, who knew every twist of his face, marked it take a new expression—one that were strange to it and me—at sight of a pretty wench that might chance to visit the school, it were only in the passing, and a thing not to be remembered.

"Not to be remembered, say I? God knows, sir! At least not by me as loved him, and to whom all speculation on his great sin, whatsoever it were, shall remain a sealed book. The pure may wrong themselves and their Maker in little things that would pass nigh unnoticed of the wicked."

Again he paused a moment, and I noticed that the sweat shone upon his forehead, as he continued:—

"He went away for two months, who had laboured for nine year, and where he spent his holiday, I know no more than that it led him some time to a far-away country called Armenia. Thus much he told me of his intentions at the first, me, his faithful servant, Jasper, and hereafter I discovered, and wished to discover no more.

"Sir, he came back upon such a November afternoon as this has been. I mind me that the fog lay in the hedges, like sheep-wool caught on brambles, and the rain that fell thick stroked the face, rather than hit upon it, like a dead hand. All was drip and silence, and I, who had expected and not expected his return, never knew of it till I heard the bell ring from his bed-room.

"I ran up and knocked at the door. He came to it immediately, and speaking from the inside, told me that he had walked over from the station with a hand-bag, that his portmanteau was to follow, and that, being tired out, he was going to bed at once, and didn't wish to be disturbed.

"I answered him, and turned away and walked softly downstairs again, with my heart thumping at my ribs. Can I tell you why? It was his voice, sir, I think, as seemed to freeze the blood in my veins with such a queer feeling as I felt when young George Gray trod upon the rotten ground over that hidden well-mouth, and it half caved in. I can't explain it, but so it was.

"The next morning I took up his shaving water, and when I came into prayers an hour later, there was he standing among his boys the same as usual—the same but for one thing. He had always been a grave quiet gentleman, tall, as you know, sir, and with little spare flesh to his bones; and as to this, if he were maybe a trifle thinner, there were small difference to notice. A melancholy look was common to his face too, with a touch of sweetness in it that turned folks' hearts, and that were not gone, for all that follows.

"Now I tell you, all this were the same, but I turned away at sight of him with a dazed, shocked feeling. It was the *colour* of his face, perhaps, or the *look* on it—either or both is more than I can say.

“Sir, I’ve seen a’many corpses in my day, but that were the first time I see a *living* corpse. Dear God! the whiteness that *came out* of his face, as if note-paper lay under his skin! Fixed and unchanging—no spot of colour ever came to it—came to it then and thereafter. And the look!—not one of terror, as makes the throat thicken and the heart stand still, but wild and wandering now and again, and called back to reason with such a fearful effort as might be meant to crush and stamp down the thought that he were *lost*.”

The old man stopped once more, and pressed the sweat from the thin tangle of hair that lay upon his forehead.

“I can’t say if this change was evident to the rest as it were to me that loved him—Christ allow that it wasn’t!—but at least his altered ways must have been.

“He took up his duties, sir, where he had dropped them, and things went on much as before, with a little that was different. It soon became patent that the master’s health couldn’t stand the strain it had once borne, and from the day of his return he handed over all night work to the unders. Every morning he was with his boys as usual, but when the day showed signs of dusking into evening, he mounted softly to his room, where his simple meal were laid out ready, and were seen again of no one till the following morning.

“If this caused remark at first, curiosity soon died out, and matters ran smoothly as before.

“But I knew him too well to misdoubt the change in him, and in my heart it came to me that something had happened in those two months he were away from us as made him another man. Now he seldom spoke to me as he had used, and when he did, it were with a sort of forced cheerfulness that didn’t mislead me—and I knew that he were growing silenter and thinner and sterner week by week.

“Sometimes his face came upon me in quiet corners with such a strange, wild look upon it as made a chill stir my marrow; sometimes I see it pass through a band of shadow in the corridor, fixed and white like biscuit china; sometimes I noticed its eyes look hither and thither as vacant as a eerie idiot’s. Once, when I were resting from chopping firewood in a outhouse, he passed by the door, and put his two hands to his forehead with a low, hard cry as made my sides stiffen like with cramp. At last—dear God, sir! how shall I tell you the end, or you believe it!”

The man’s hands were trembling, and his lips. He made one or two attempts to moisten the latter, and, failing, forced himself to speak again in a reedy, uncertain voice.

“One dark, still night I were a’going up to bed, after seeing all the lights out according to custom. No sound were in the house or about it, saving a pulse of distant breathing now and again from the boys’ dormitory, and the faint rough croak of a cornerake in some far-away meadow. Since your brother’s changed habits, it had

become my way to stay up some half hour after all others were a'bed, to make sure there were no suspicion of fire left anywheres to the danger of the house; and now, having seen all safe, I were a'going up to my own attic. On the way I had to pass his room-door, which were of a general fast locked. This night, however, something led me to pause outside of it, for I seemed to hear him a'muttering in his sleep within. Then I were moved to try the handle of his door softly, and to my wonder the door itself shifted open without a noise. He must have forgotten to lock it. Gently I stood my candle on the landing carpet, and tiptoed round the edge of the door into the room, and looked for the bed. What I saw nigh made me scream out with the horror of it. Sir, sir, there were a face upon the pillow, white as dreadful death, shining without flicker or shadow, like as if it had been rubbed with phosphorous—his face—my master's face—your own brother's!

"I give a horrid gasp and stepped back, a'holding out my hands to keep it off; and the sound woke him, for I see the face rise and hang, as it were, unmeaning in the close blackness of the room; and the eyes were wide open with terror a'staring at me.

"It were the sound of his voice that saved me, I think, from going into a fit.

"*'Jasper,'* he whispered in awful tones, *'is that you? in God's name, is that you?'*

"I tried to answer, but couldn't, and all this while the face stood out before me, a hideous blot of white in the blackness, and I was a'feared that it would come floating towards me.

"*'Are all in bed?'* he whispered again, with a fearful trembling sound as if his limbs were a'shake. Then he give a soft moan, and his hands come up to it, and the spread fingers stood black like bars against a dull fire.

"*'My friend,'* he said—sir, it were awful to hear speech come and no body visible—the terrible secret I thought to keep my own must be shared now by you. Have no fear. This horror that you see is no apparition, but your wretched, wretched master.'

"In a moment it bent so as to hide its features, and in that moment the Lord Christ willed that a spring of love and pity should master the terror in my heart.

"*'Master,'* I found speech to whisper, *'what is this?'* and at the agony of my voice I see the tears glitter in his eyes like great diamonds.

"Then he spoke once more, broken and gasping, and I learnt all I was ever to know.

"*'Be my friend,'* he said, so low and sorrowful that my very soul bled. *'Question me never as to this dreadful punishment—for punishment it is, and one that I shall bear with me to the grave, but after—Oh, God! No! no!'*

"I saw his quivering hands rise dark, clasped together as if in prayer.

"*'I have greatly sinned,'* he said, *'and for the black crime done*

in darkness He hath branded me with everlasting light. When they deliberately fall who have walked in righteousness, the atonement must be commensurate. Thus am I cursed—thus am I branded to the end, and it is my just doom to work out the remainder of my life solitary as the leper of Syria, and not abhorred of my fellow-man only as I hide my awful secret from him. To you has come knowledge—perhaps designed of Him to lighten a little my intolerable burden. I charge you, keep faith with me. Treat me, if you can, as heretofore, nor add by word or act to my present and lasting torture. Be silent, and when merciful death shall release me at last, see, I charge you, that my secret be buried with my poor body in God's Acre.'

"His voice, that had grown stronger as he proceeded, here sank low again, and from the depths of my grief I answered him:—

"'Master, you will ever be the same to me, and your secret is mine.'

"Then I found strength to steal from the room, but as I shut the door softly behind me such a horror ran through me once more of what I was leaving on the other side that I thought I should a'died."

The old man's head sank upon his breast as he uttered these last low words with a soft rattling sound in his throat like that of wind on a crazy shutter. For minutes no stir of anything was in the room or the quiet house; but there in the dim half-light of terror I sat watching and listening—listening for a release, a comfort that would never come. Then suddenly I leaped to my feet, and crossed the room, and stood confronting him with a madness of determination to hear the silence broken, if only by my own harsh voice.

"Finish!" I cried, "as God has revealed himself!"

At this he stirred and gave a little moan. His very voice seemed to have aged in the period of his past speech to the thin pipe of ninety.

"Aye," he said, "for I've kept silence with him for nine year—for nine long year from that hideous night, and you are his one brother. Would you hear of his endless agony minute by minute and day by day?—nay, not endless, for the call came at last. Would you hear of how my own heart turned grey in my breast to know what I knew alone; to guard and fend wi'out seeming to watch him, and to think night by night of what lay shining there awful in the dark room behind the locked door? Would——"

Like one demented he rose with a thin shriek to his feet, and clutched me convulsively by either shoulder, and stared into my eyes with his own wide and ashen as the mists of death.

"Sir, sir!" he cried, "tell me, in God's name, was he forgiven in the end?"

The perspiration ran from my forehead. I put an arm gently about the wild form, and essayed to soothe its mad excitement, but without avail.

"Tell me first!" he cried again with a sob.

"Hush," I said, "be calm, and let me know the end."

Gradually his fingers slid from my shoulders, and fell together into the clasped attitude of prayer.

"The end," he whispered, "came sudden. One morning I found him kneelin' at his bedside, dead. He didn't answer when I knocked, and I tried the door. Had he foreseen the end? For 'twas the second time only he had failed to fasten himself in.

"He had died while prayin'—but, sir, when I turned his poor face, the white horror were there yet."

He paused, panting, then went on in a broken voice :—

"It were there then and after. They came and laid him out, and trembled at the strangeness of it; but I kept his secret—I kept his awful secret to the end. There was an inquest the next day in the very room, and the doctors held that he died of heart-disease—though I heard one say it were a strange case, and if the evidence had pointed to it he should a'thought it brought about by a sudden fearful shock or fright. But those two days and the next when evening drew near, I let none enter the room but me; and they humoured me and bid me watch by my old friend. Watch! Merciful Heaven, sir! If but one o' them could a'seen what I *watched* when the darkness stole into the room, it would a'drove him screaming mad. To sit staring at that white, fixed dead face with its secret light, and to think awful thoughts of what unseen horrors might be a'creeping about the bed the night through, while the old clock in the hall ticked out the beats of one's heart, and the wind drove against the window-pane like a spirit wild to get in! It will go with me to the grave—it has brought my own death-bed within touch of my arm a'most."

With a hard shiver he put up his hands and once more clutched me frantically by the shoulders.

"You are a learned man, Master Rollo," he cried, "and a good one, the Lord grant. Was he forgiven, in the name of God? Oh, sir, sir! the night after they had screwed him down into his coffin I were left with him—and I looked, and the dull glow came faint through the chinks. It were there the next day, though none might know it in the sunlight. It must be burning under the earth where he is laid!"

And I could only whisper:—"Jasper, let us pray from the great depths of mercy that it was the light of Christ's face shining upon him as he went."

* * * * *

I write this from my familiar place of exile, whither I returned the week of my interview with the old servant. The spot where my brother lies buried is unknown to my footsteps, only I have learned recently that in a corner of the same holy acre his faithful adherent sleeps at rest. No true home have I, and little happiness; but an awful belief to hold in trust for the good of my soul and the occasional lightening of its despair.

For God must be merciful.

Robert Browning.

In Memoriam.



ON the last day of the year 1889 all that was mortal of Robert Browning was laid amongst the ashes of his peers in the great Abbey which is the heart of the vast city that owned him as her son.

Amidst the hushed reverence of the serried crowd, attended to his last rest by countless mourners, covered with innumerable garlands of love and honour, and sung to sleep by the lullaby of the one beloved woman, the mortal sheath of the Man who had never belied the greatness of the Poet was committed to its honoured grave. And as the final benediction was given and the awful music of the Dead March rose and fell—now rolling in thunder through nave and transept, now wailing in thrilling whispers—the sun himself, obscured for well-nigh three days by impenetrable fogs, burst through the gloom, and piercing the southern windows with shafts of golden light, glorified the Abbey and filled its dusky shadows with radiance.

It was well done of London so to lift her veil of enshrouding darkness to do honour to her poet. No truer earnest of immortality, no more living tribute to the genius—the teaching of life and work of the noble dead—were imaginable. It was Browning translated into light.

“One who never turned his back, but marched breast forward,
Never doubted clouds would break,
Never dreamed, though right were worsted, wrong would triumph,
Held we fall to rise, are baffled to fight better,
Sleep to wake.”

Robert Browning has been for the last month so familiar a subject in all men's minds, that it is hardly necessary even to recall the date of his birth or the events of his grandly simple life, where personal character, not circumstances, ruled supreme.

“*Pauline*,” given to the world in 1833, when its author was twenty-one, was his first published poem. “*Paracelsus*” followed in 1835, and then with “*Strafford*” began the series of plays with which in these pages we are more closely concerned.

“*Strafford*,” than which few nobler and more moving poems exist in our language, whatever may be the general verdict on its dramatic power, was written, at Macready's desire, in 1836, and brought out at Covent Garden Theatre on the 1st of May, 1837, with Macready as *Strafford* and Miss Helen Faucit as *Lady Carlisle*.

Macready, notwithstanding his doubts as to the play's success, had

obtained its acceptance by the management, and the poet, later on, testified strongly to his unceasing care in its production as well as to his fine acting of the title *rôle*. But although received with strong marks of favour, the closing of the theatre through dissensions in the company, five nights after the production of the play, put a stop to its career.

The abrupt termination of "Strafford's" theatrical existence had no power to kill its author's dramatic instincts. "Pippa Passes," written in 1841; "King Victor and King Charles," in 1842; "The Return of the Druses," in 1843; "Luria," and "A Soul's Tragedy," in 1846, have never been acted: nor is it likely now that they ever will be, since with all their wealth of passion and dramatic insight, their tragic intensity and tender sentiment, it is undeniable that they fail in continuous dramatic action.

But in 1843 at Drury Lane Theatre appeared "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon," the only one of the poet's plays that held the stage for any length of time. Produced on the 11th of February, with Phelps as Lord Tresham, Miss Helen Faucit as Mildred, and Mrs. Stirling as Gwendolen, it ran until the 3rd of June following.

On the opening night the poet was called to acknowledge the applause of a crowded house, and the play was an undoubted success. In later days Phelps revived it during his management of Sadler's Wells.

The production on the 25th of April, 1853, at the Haymarket, of "Colombe's Birthday," with Miss Helen Faucit as Colombe, closes the list of performances of Browning's plays, except for certain courageous revivals of them under the auspices of the Browning Society, such as that at the Prince's Hall of "In a Balcony" on November 28th, 1884, when Miss Alma Murray played Constance; of "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon," by a company of amateurs at St. George's Hall on the 30th of April, 1885; of "Colombe's Birthday" at St. George's Hall in November, 1885, with Miss Alma Murray as Colombe. These, with the performance at the Strand Theatre on December 21st, 1886, by the Dramatic Students, of "Strafford," and a single afternoon performance of "A Blot in the 'Scutcheon" at the Olympic still later, bring the history of Browning's plays down to the present day.

Possibly his death may give an impetus to more or less amateur attempts at fresh revivals of the already acted plays in the immediate future: but it is probable that unless some manager, as enthusiastic in admiration for the poet as was Macready, and more sanguine of success, should devote his energies to the production of—"Strafford," let us say—with all the pomp and circumstance which distinguish modern Shakespearian revivals, Browning's dramas will live in the hearts and minds of his readers rather than on the stage.

In those they must always live with a sublime force.

It may be that in movement, in stage-craft, in the power of holding the popular mind, they are somewhat wanting. Probably, at least with regard to such works as "Colombe's Birthday," and still more "In a Balcony," there could never be more than a select few found

to applaud plays of intense dramatic motive and expression with so little scope for varied scene or action.

But on the ultimate stage of all human drama, the stage on which the essential tragedy is played—the human soul—Browning need fear no rival. He plays on the very heart's-strings; he illumines motives lurking deep in its inmost recesses; his thought rises and expands, until it boils over, so to speak, and becomes his reader's.

To mention only the last act of "Strafford," there is scarce a sentence, from the piteous Spring-song of the hapless children sharing their father's imprisonment, to that deceived and betrayed father's passionate appeal to his ancient friend to save the King who has left him to perish, which does not pierce like a dagger to the heart.

Of the Poet's other works, the long list of undying poems with which he has enriched for ever his native tongue, and the land, which even his devotion to the beautiful country of his death and his wife's grave could never dethrone from its supremacy in his love, there is neither room nor need to speak here.

"When we take down Browning," says the author of "Obiter Dicta" in his delightful essay on the Poet, "we cannot think of him and the 'wormy bed' together. He is so unmistakably and deliciously alive."

And although we have seen his body laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, which of us does not feel it impossible but that that strong spirit has realized his own dearest hope?

"Help and get it over! *Re-united to his wife,*

(How draw up the paper lets the parish people know?)

Lies M. or N., departed from this life,

Day the this or that, month and year the so and so,

What i' the way of final flourish? Prose, verse? Try!

Affliction sore, long time he bore, or, what is it to be?

Till God did please to grant him ease. Do end!" quoth I,

"I end with—Love is all and Death is nought!" quoth she.

M. B.



Our Play=Box.

“MASTER AND MAN.”

Drama in four Acts by HENRY PETTITT and G. R. SIMS.
Produced at the Princess's Theatre, December 18, 1889.

Jack Walton	Mr. HENRY NEVILLE.	Joe Robins	{ Mr. E. WEBSTER
Tom Honeywood	Mr. SIDNEY HOWARD.		LAWSON.
Robert Carlton	Mr. CHARLES DALTON.	Old Ben	Mr. GEORGE DALZIEL.
Humpy Logan	Mr. ROBERT PATEMAN.	Landlord	Mr. MORTON BAKER.
Jem Burleigh	Mr. J. H. BARNES.	Postman	Mr. G. W. AUBREY.
Crispin St. John	Mr. E. W. GARDINER.	Policeman 207	Mr. EDWARDE.
John Willett	Mr. BASSETT ROE.	Hester Thornbury	Miss BELLA PATEMAN.
Levano	Mr. FRED SHEPHERD.	Little Johnny	Miss MARIE PEARL.
Jim	Mr. MAYEUR.	Letty Lightfoot	Miss FANNY BROUGH.
Ned Barton	Mr. KINGSCOTE.	Keziah Honeywood	Mrs. FRANK HUNTLEY.
		Katey and Janey	Misses JESSIE & ROSIE.

Although “Master and Man” has had a successful run in the provinces, and was lately seen to advantage at the Grand, it had not hitherto been afforded such a thoroughly favourable opportunity for establishing itself in public favour as in its present home. It will in future be recognised as one of the happiest efforts in collaboration by the authors. Humpy Logan, a deformed and soured manager of the ironworks, has been refused by Hester Thornbury, the village school-mistress, and so his love turns to the most bitter hatred, and he devotes his life to mar her happiness. With this view he tries to sow discord between her and Jack Walton (whom she marries, however) and to throw her into the arms of his own master, an unprincipled villain, Robert Carlton, and gives such false evidence that Walton is convicted of an attempt on Carlton’s life. The convict escapes and takes refuge in “The Ironworks.” Here, hidden behind the huge shaft, he witnesses the attempt of the forgemmen, driven to desperation by Logan’s cruelty, to throw their overseer into the living furnace. Walton steps forward and saves his life, and this causes a complete change in the hunchback’s character. He proves Walton’s innocence, and also that Carlton has wrongfully taken possession of property which should be Hester’s, and has caused her child to be stolen from her. The underplot consists in the hunting down of Carlton by Jem Burleigh, whose wife he has taken away, and the comic love-making between Letty Lightfoot, a bright, coquettish girl (excellently played by Miss Fanny Brough) and her two admirers, Tom Honeywood (capitally rendered by Mr. Sidney Howard), and a silly lawyer’s clerk, Crispin St. John (a most effective light comedy character in Mr. E. W. Gardiner’s hands). Mr. Henry Neville is exactly fitted to play Jack Walton, and plays splendidly. Mr. Robert Pateman shows great power as Logan ; his abject fear and entreaties for the life that he thinks is to be taken from him in such a horrible manner are thoroughly realistic. Mr. J. H. Barnes gives a pathetic reading of Jem Burleigh, and Mr. Bassett Roe as Inspector Willett lets us see how much may be made of a small part. Miss Bella Pateman is an engaging heroine. The cast is altogether good, and the mounting of the piece of the best.

"A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM."

A Faerie Comedy by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

As presented by F. R. Eenson's Shakesperian Company at the Globe Theatre on Thursday, December 19th, 1889.

CHARACTERS.—MORTALS.

Theseus	Mr. SYDNEY PRICE.	Flute	Mr. STEPHEN PHILLIPS.
Egeus	Mr. ALFRED BRYDONE.	Snout	{ Mr. H. GORDON
Lysander	Mr. F. R. BENSON.		TOMKINS.
Demetrius	Mr. HERBERT ROSS.	Starveling	Mr. ARTHUR GRENVILLE
Philostrate	Mr. G. M. HOWARD.	Hippolyta	Miss MARION GREY.
Quince	Mr. H. ATHOL FORD.	Hermia	Miss ADA FERRAR.
Snug	Mr. G. F. BLACK.	Helena	Miss KATE RORKE.
Bottom	Mr. G. R. WEIR.		

Soldiers, Courtiers, Attendants, Priests, &c.

IMMORTALS.

Oberon	Mr. OTHO STUART.	First Fairy	{ Miss MAY WOOLGAR-
Titania	Mrs. F. R. BENSON.		MELLON.
Puck or Robin } (Miss GRACE		Peasblossom	Miss FREDA LANGTON.
Goodfellow }) GERALDINE.		Cobweb	Miss JESSIE BATEMAN.
Singing Fairy	Miss MARY TOWNSEND.	Moth	Miss LILY STEWART.
		Mustard Seed	Miss LILY LORRELL.

Fairies, Elves, Spirits of the Trees, &c.

For beauty of scenery, correctness in costume, and general perfection in stage-mounting it would be difficult to surpass the production at the Globe Theatre. Taking into consideration the limited space at command, Mr. Hugh Moss has achieved wonders, and may be deservedly complimented on the excellent result of his efforts. The arrangements for spectacular display in both the exterior and interior of Theseus's Palace, the exquisite beauty of Titania's Bower, with its numerous elves tripping here and there and peeping forth from all sorts of nooks and crannies, the twinkling lights of the glow-worms, and the excellent setting of "A Wood near Athens" will long be quoted by playgoers. To add to the enjoyment of these scenes Mendelssohn's music was well executed by a competent orchestra under Mr. Boggetti, and the songs, "Over Hill and Over Dale" (Cooke), "On the Ground," the incantation, "What Thou See'st," the chorale "Ye Spotted Snakes," and the duett, "I Know a Bank" (Horn) were more than pleasingly rendered by Miss M. Townsend, Miss Mitchelmore, Mr. Otho Stuart, Mr. George Adams, and Mr. Stedman's choir. On the opening night the company one and all suffered from extreme nervousness. Cares of management pressed on the young lessee, Mr. F. R. Benson, and his Lysander accordingly suffered. Miss Kate Rorke has so long been identified with modern comedy that her Helena was of that order, and disappointed those who had expected great things from this talented young actress. Miss Ada Ferrar's Hermia was distinctly good, and this lady will surely make her mark. Mr. Sidney Price was a very capable Theseus, especially as he kindly undertook the part at the shortest notice. Mr. Herbert Ross as Demetrius was uneven, but at times showed considerable promise. Mr. Otho Stuart proved himself a Shakespearian student, and delivered the text admirably; so did Mr. G. M. Howard as Philostrate. Mrs. F. R. Benson was a graceful and pleasing Titania; Miss Grace Geraldine a mischievous and sprightly Puck, and Miss Marion Grey an attractive Hippolyta. Much amusement was caused by Bottom and his companions, though there was far more low comedy than is legitimate in Shakespeare. Mr. G. R. Weir, as Bottom, introduced some clever and original business which was well received. I ought certainly to mention most favourably the dances arranged by Mr. Ozman, and the truly artistic scene painting by Mr. Hemsley, who has also provided an interesting subject for the new act drop, representing the Globe Theatre, Bank-side, with a view of Old St. Paul's, the Bear Pit, and the Royal Pike

Ponds as they appeared in Shakespeare's time. A subsequent visit showed me that the company had one and all much improved, and made me look forward with considerable hope to the further Shakesperian productions announced for the near future.

"MAN AND THE WOMAN."

New play in three acts by ROBERT BUCHANAN.

First produced at the Criterion Theatre, Thursday Afternoon, December 19, 1889.

Sir Geo. Venables, Bart.	Mr. F. H. MACKLIN.	Stokes	Mr. GILBERT.
Rev. Dr. Herbert	Mr. JOHN BEAUCHAMP.	Gillian Dartmouth ..	Miss MYRA KEMBLE.
Rev. Mr. Bream	Mr. NUTCOMBE GOULD.	Barbara Leigh	Miss ADA NEILSON.
Philip O'Mara	Mr. CYRIL MAUDE.	Little Dora	Miss D. HARWOOD.
Jake Owen	Mr. F. M. PAGET.		

Mr. Buchanan would, I think, have added to the interest of a clever and well-written play, had he not shown us so clearly in his first act the means whereby his heroine would be extricated from her difficulties. Gillian Dartmouth is one of those unhappy women who, married, when quite young in her case, to Philip O'Mara, soon discovers her husband to be everything that is wicked and base. After seven years of ill-treatment, he robs her of what little she possesses and deserts her. She inherits a little property, assumes the name of Dartmouth, and, as after some little time she learns her husband is dead, thinks herself justified in accepting the love of Sir George Venables. The day before her marriage with the baronet, O'Mara presents himself again, and at once claims to resume his masterly position in the household. Rather than submit to this Gillian leaves everything behind her but her child. Piqued at her repugnance, O'Mara employs Stokes to steal Little Dora, knowing that this will bring his wife back. She does return, and driven to desperation, she determines to appeal to the Divorce Court and free herself. In this course she is supported by the Rev. Mr. Bream, "a muscular Christian," whereas the Rev. Dr. Herbert, a narrow-minded churchman of the old school, believing that nothing should part man and wife, urges her to forgive O'Mara, who has won him over by his hypocritical sycophancy. Which course is the right one? Mr. Buchanan evidently enquires in the abstract; but in his play O'Mara is assassinated by Jake Owen, whose wife the libertine husband has taken from her home and then left to starve. The materials are not very new, but appear so in the vivid telling, and Miss Myra Kemble, an Australian actress, made her *debüt* in England, and is certainly an acquisition to the London Stage. She is ladylike, has a very sweet voice, and is in sympathy with her audience. Mr. Cyril Maude had a very difficult part to play, a polished gentleman outwardly, a man of artistic tastes and honeyed accents when it pleases him; when he does show the cloven hoof he betrays himself to be a cowardly bully, devoid of every manly feeling. Even such a complex character as this the young actor very nearly succeeded in rendering to perfection. Mr. Beauchamp and Mr. Nutcombe Gould were excellent as the different types of clergymen; and Mr. F. M. Paget, though a little too much *en evidence* in the play, was powerful as the maddened, revengeful Jake Owen. Mr. F. H. Macklin was natural as the Baronet; Miss Ada Neilson clever as the honest outspoken servant Barbara Leigh, and Miss D. Harwood was very winning and unstagey as Little Dora.

“THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD.”

Burlesque extravaganza written by WILLIAM BROUGH. Music by JOHN CROOK.

Revived at the Avenue Theatre, December 24th, 1889.

Revival 1889.

Original production April 11, 1868.

Henry VIII. of England	Mr. GEORGE CAPEL.	Mr. CHARLES FENTON.
Francis I. of France	Mr. ALBERT CHEVALIER.	Mr. DAVID JAMES.
Earl Darnley	Miss MINNIE BYRON.	Miss LYDIA THOMPSON.
Tête-de-Veau	Mr. HARRY GRATTAN.	Mr. F. ROBSON.
Sir Guy the Cripple	Mr. JULIAN CROSS.	Mr. THOMAS THORNE.
The Duke of Suffolk	Miss VIOLET EVELYN.	Miss AMY SHERIDAN.
Le Sieur de Boissy	Miss HENRIETTE POLAK.	Miss ELISE HOLT.
Von Schlascher	Mr. H. GRAHAM.	Mr. SELWYN.
Von Krasher	Mr. STANLEY BETJEMAN.	Mr. TOWNSEND.
Von Smascher	Mr. BENJAMIN BENWELL.	Mr. SMITH.
Bloc	Mr. AMBROSE COLINI.	Mr. IMRIE.
Queen Catherine	Miss MARIA DAVIS.	Miss H. J. TURNER.
Anne Boleyn	Miss AMELIA GRUHN.	Miss FANNY HUGHES.
The Lady Constance de Grey ..	Miss MARIE LINDEN.	Miss ADA SWANBOROUGH.
Rose de la Foix	Miss J. ELCHO.	Miss WALTERS.

There is scarcely a line in this very clever burlesque of William Brough's but what contains some fanciful conceit, some audacious pun. One of the latter will live to all time, in the words uttered by bluff King Hall when suffering from the after effects of *mâl-de-mer* :—

Yesterday all was fair—a glorious Sunday,
But this *sick transit* spoils the *glory o' Monday*.

There is ample fun in the absurd situations produced by the jealousy of Queen Katherine ; in the schemes of Sir Guy the Cripple to ruin his rival Darnley and gain possession of his lady love, Lady Constance ; in the tournament in which Henry and Francis “break a lance” and then descend to the more plebeian bout of fisticuffs, and in the combat *à outrance* between Sir Guy and Darnley, in which the former is killed but revives to speak the tag. Yet *tempora mutantur et nos, &c.*, will account, I suppose, for the only partial appreciation of a burlesque that was reckoned twenty-one years ago to be most laughable and proved such a financial success. Not a line has been cut, scarcely one altered ; the music arranged by Mr. Crook is bright and lively ; there are some capital dances, breakdowns, and songs ; the handsome dresses are worn by even handsomer young damsels, and the cast is good. The piece has grown in favour since the first night, but on that occasion I confess I was disappointed at its reception, which I had expected would have been all that could be desired by the management. Mr. George Capel is a little ponderous as King Henry, but is master of considerable dry humour. As to Mr. Albert Chevalier, as Francis, he was delightfully droll ; his fun seemed to be such a natural outcome, so quaint and so original, and his songs are droll and well sung. He most certainly contributed largely to the *encores* gained. Miss Minnie Byron and Miss Marie Linden were full of life and spirits as Darnley and Lady Constance. Mr. Julian Cross has not done anything better for some time than Sir Guy the Cripple ; his hatred and his passion were at times almost Robsonian in power, and his eccentric dance brought down the house. And we had some clever and attractive actresses in Misses Polak, Evelyn, and Grün. Miss Maria Davis was good as Queen Katherine ; and as all exerted themselves to the utmost, the burlesque should have pleased—as it did, but not to the extent I anticipated. Prior to the burlesque, “In the Express,” a very smartly written adaptation, by R. K. Hervey, of “En Wagon” was played by Miss Isabel Ellison (remarkably well) assisted by Mr. George Sinclair. Miss Amelia Grün became a favourite at once, both for her singing and acting, as Fleurette in Offenbach's “La Rose d'Auvergne,” with

Mr. Alec Marsh as Pierre and Mr. Joseph Tapley as Alphonse, both of whom were much applauded. At the Avenue, too, "The Belles of the Village" draws large audiences every afternoon, a brisk harlequinade having been added for the delight of the younger holiday makers.

"TRA LA LA TOSCA, OR THE HIGH-TONED SOPRANO, AND THE VILLAIN BASE."

A burlesque in two acts by F. C. BURNAND, on Messrs. GROVE & HAMILTON'S version of Sardou's "La Tosca." Music by FLORIAN PASCAL.

First produced at the Royalty Theatre, Thursday evening, January 9, 1890.

The Queen of Naples ..	Miss LIDDON.	Signorina Larki Dar-	}	Miss LILY MARSDEN.
Floria Tra La La }	Miss MARGARET AYRTOUN.	emo, Generalissimo }		
Tosca, originally a }		Trombonio }	}	Miss FRANCES DENTON
Street Singer... .. }	Marchesa Nonpica }			
Baron Scampia Scar-	Mr. ARTHUR ROBERTS.	Mesta, &c.. &c., }	}	Miss MAGGIE DOUGLAS.
pia, Chief of the }		(with power to add }		
Italian Peelerini .. }		to their number).. }	}	Miss PADDY ST. CLARE.
Count Mario di Cam-	Miss AGNES	Signor Farfallone .. }		
eradosi, Socialistic }	DELAPORTE.	Signorine Connie Mo-	}	Miss FANNIE MERTON.
Artist and Photo-		to, Anne Dante, Ada }		
grapher }		Gio, Ann Diamo .. }	}	
Cesare Angelotti, pro-	Miss LAURA HANSEN.	Il Capitano Batti Bat-		
prietor of Casa Gam-		ti, Marchesa Fan }	}	
blina }		Tutti }		
Spiacroni, Scarpia's }	Mr. GEORGE PRIOR.	Spaghetti .. }	Spies used in various capacities.	Mr. HAMPTON GORDON.
Chief Spy }				Maccaroni .. }	Mr. WALTER TILBURY.
Jemmi Rino, Boy }	Miss H. BENNETT.	Spermacetti .. }		Mr. WILLIAM GILBERT.
in the service of }		Ravioli }		Mr. JAMES DELANEY.
Cameradosi }		Niuneli }		Mr. ROBERT MASON.
Bumblini, Guardian }	Mr. A. WHEATMAN.	Nianti }		Mr. WILLIAM LOVELL.
of a Museum }		Jolinosia }		Mr. HARRY DANIELS.
Marchesa Tutti Tutti }	Miss MORTON.	Dogerini }		Mr. ARTHUR DODSON.
Contessa Ann Cora }		Stepito }		Mr. GUY FANE.
Contessa Lotti Totti }	Miss MAUD ROYAL.	Tentosa }		Mr. ARTHUR WITHERS
Admiralo Benboni }				

It is generally admitted that Mr. Burnand is at his happiest when burlesquing some well-known play, and his latest skit on "La Tosca" is one of his finest efforts. He has most humorously seized upon those situations which were best suited for travestie, and has parodied them in the most felicitous manner. Thus the opening church scene is transferred into "Nel-Museo Kensintonia," hung with the most atrocious "pot-boilers," and Count Cameradosi, a photographer, is interviewed by Angelotti, who is escaping from the *peelerini* for being found in a gambling saloon. La Tosca comes in, and is jealous because she fancies she hears a voice which Cameradosi explains as being that of a cat, and says—

"The very place for cats is a Mew-seum."

and on her insisting that some lady love of his is hidden in the words,

"Cherchez la femme."

he replies—

"Mais cherchez, cherchez don, ma chère, chez moi."

and in the true spirit of burlesque, makes La Tosca entreat him to render the picture of which she is jealous, ugly. After her departure Scarpia enters with his myrmidons (whose faces are made up after the manner of the "white-eyed Kaffir") and because Jemmi Rino will not answer his questions, orders them to

"Take him to a Board School building! Go!
Off to the house that Jerry built!
I'm fond of torture as you are aware,
And slowly you will learn what's taught yer there."

In the State Concert Room in the Palazzo, Miss Liddon has a clever scene in which she gives a very amusing burlesque imitation of Miss

Rose Leclercq as the Queen of Naples ; and Scarpia works on the jealousy of La Tosca with a huge fan. What will probably be considered the best situation is the "Studio Oscuro di Conte Cameradosi," in which the Count is supposed to undergo the torture in the billiard-room, and Scarpia says—

"Give him his cue
And then he'll speak—if not, put on the screw."

and the unfortunate count is to be subjected to Boulanger's March played on an organ and whistled by street boys ; to an "amateur imitation of Henry Irving with a recitation ;" to listen to the reading of the whole Parnell Commission ; all the letters on Bimetallism ; and have his head filled with puzzles and acrostics, the result of which is that after La Tosca has spoken the Count staggers in, drawn out to represent an enormously tall figure of Irving as Robert Landry after coming out of the Bastille, and the body of Angelotti is brought in as a 5th of November Guy Fawkes. The killing of Scarpia is supposed to take place in the "Camera Segreta del Caffè Romano Nello Strando." The Baron woos Flora after the most grotesque fashion, and finally she stabs him with a huge bill that the waiter has presented for payment, and before she leaves his supposed corpse reverently covers the face with a dish cover ! Cameradosi's execution takes place on the "Bastione del Castel Angelo d'Islingtonia," where he is done to death by being "taken off" by ten photographers at once, and La Tosca jumps from the ramparts followed by the *peelerini* shouting "yoicks gone away" like huntsmen after a pack in full cry. The close of the burlesque was brought about by Mr. Arthur Roberts appearing in evening dress made up as Mr. Hare of the Garrick Theatre ; but this has been done away with, and other business in which Mr. Roberts shines has been profitably introduced. On the first representation Mr. Roberts did not know his lines, or at least did not give them as set down in the text, and there were, therefore, loud expressions of disapproval at the close of the evening, not at Mr. Burnand, who was most cordially received, but at the delinquent actor. I am happy to say that since then Mr. Roberts gives the humorous lines in their integrity and, at the same time, an amusing representation of Scarpia. Miss Margaret Ayrton, whose powers of imitation of Mrs. Bernard-Beere are already well known, was almost too faithful a copy, and was sometimes so realistic in her agony as to miss the burlesque side ; but still it was an admirable performance. Miss Agnes Delaporte was specially bright and lively as Cameradosi. Miss Laura Hansen was a sparkling Angelotti. Mr. George Prior gave a clever travestie of the original as Spiacroni. Florian Pascal's music might have been a little more lively. Anyone who has seen the original "La Tosca" should on no account fail to visit the Royalty, as the burlesque is *now* played there.

CECIL HOWARD.

§ Notices of "*Marjorie*" and "*A Sinless Secret*" unavoidably withheld through exigencies of space.



Our Musical-Box.

Let me confess at once to a little disappointment in "The Gondoliers," though perhaps it is not fair to expect that a composer's tenth opera should have the melodic grace of his fourth or the spirited freshness of his third. It is delightfully pretty, and distinctly light; the opening chorus and recit. is characteristic, and is accompanied by the strings in the old Sullivan style. A bright duet follows, and the "blind-man's buff" scene, and a valse air. The *entrée* of the Duke of Plaza-Toro is both comical and effective; a song with a patter refrain for the Duke and a not very striking duet for the lovers follow. The Grand Inquisitor's song is not very original, but derives its charm from the words, which are really funny. A quintette, "Try We Lifelong," is clever, but not striking; and the song, "When a Merry Maiden Marries," opens with a phrase curiously like one in "Love's Old Sweet Song." The solo for soprano with the refrain:—

"Ah me, you men will never understand
That woman's heart is one with woman's hand,"

is smooth and pretty. A quartette, "A Right-down Regular Royal Queen," is light and merry, and charmingly orchestrated. The two Kings have a very comical duet in which they each sing alternately a few words; but the finale is tame, except for the melodious solos for the two wives left at home, and not particularly strong. The second act opens with a bright chorus in six-eight. The song for one of the Kings, "Rising Early in the Morning," is very catching and quite in the Sullivan vein again; and the tenor song that follows it for the other King is particularly graceful in character, daintily accompanied with muted violins. The Cachucha is most melodious and lively; and the quartette, "In a Contemplative Fashion," very cleverly written, and shows plainly how well author and composer understand each other's humour. The solo, "On the Day that I was Wedded," and a duet for the Duke and the Duchess, are both pure and simple Sullivan; but Sir Arthur has never written anything more deliciously graceful than the gavotte-quintette. It is quite the prettiest thing in the whole opera. The finale is bright, and the curtain falls on a snatch of the "*gondolieri*" Duet in the opening scene and the merry Cachucha.

Music is like champagne; anybody who wants an exhilarating draught can just now get it at the Avenue Theatre, of a truth. Those who prefer their wine extra dry must go to the Popular or the Symphony Concerts; there is not much of the classic in Mr. John Crook's music, unless the inevitable "Ask a Policeman" can be so called; but the brand, if not a famous one, is well selected, and the sparkle is undeniable; there is life and vivacity in the wine. As for the old Strand burlesque, one cannot help remembering the adage—somewhat apposite to the above—about putting new wine in old

bottles. But Mr. Crook's new wine is not too strong ; and the old bottles seem to be able to bear the ordeal. I must confess I like an occasional draught of this champagne ; it is a "clean" wine, and leaves no unpleasant taste in the memory. It is not *Koch fils* or *Roederer*, it is John Crook, 1889 music-hall vintage, with an American blend ; and it is bright, enlivening, and exhilarating. It makes the face to smile, the eyes to dance, and the heart to glow in a fashion that many a more celebrated brand of wine could not do. *Toujours champagne* would be too much ; but a draught now and again of the Avenue sparkling nectar would do no one harm, and a great many people very much good. Only one thing ; I am sorry that pretty little Miss Grünh should waste her voice in singing a very commonplace song, feebly imitative of "Dresden China" and "Love's Old Sweet Song." Everybody sang, acted, and danced vivaciously, as though they enjoyed it all. Who doesn't know "The Rose of Auvergne," with the delightful trio and the tenor song ? This precedes the burlesque, and is charmingly sung and played by Miss Grünh, Joseph Tapley, and George Sinclair, the last named taking Alec Marsh's place when he went to the Lyric. What ho, waiter ! bring me a bottle of champagne, Avenue brand and make haste, for it's out of the bill at the end of the month.

I have always considered Jacobi a master of ballet music ; but I do not think he has quite equalled himself in "Asmodeus" at the Alhambra. It is pre-eminently graceful and characteristic—perhaps it was only on the first hearing that it struck me as being less melodious. The overture, admirably rendered by what is probably the finest band in London, is short but pleasing, and has one very striking martial theme. An opening bolero is graceful ; and the Moorish Dance very quaint and Oriental. But the prettiest thing in the whole score—it is heard thrice—is the guitar dance for muted strings—a delightful bit of melody. Nothing in the second scene takes the fancy, except the manner in which the music interprets the story on the stage ; but the Grand March and the "Andalucia," in tableau three, are happy examples of the composer at his best, and the finale *farandole* would not be out of place in an opera. A male dancer as a rule is an anomaly, but Signor de Vincenti created a furore as Asmodeus, and his performance is wonderfully fine. Signorina Bessone is *première danseuse* ; but the prettiest dancers at the Alhambra are Mademoiselle Marie and little Miss Thurgate ; the "Andalucia" dance of the latter is perfection.

Comparisons are odious ; so those who go to the Empire had better not recollect Hervé while hearing and seeing the new ballet, "A Dream of Wealth." M. Leopold Wenzel is too fond of noise, and ballet-music should, in my opinion, be light and delicate. I listened vainly for a calming, soothing melody from strings and wood. No—all was brass and noise and fury. One movement alone, in polka-tempo, was pleasing. Certainly brass is metal, but hardly a precious metal, so not indispensable in "A Dream of Wealth." The ballet is magnificent, the dresses superb, and the story is told effectively—*après* Dickens—but the music is too much for it and for me !

CLIFTON BINGHAM.



Our Amateurs' Play=Box.

The Romany A.D.C. have taken the right line in striking out towards the classical drama, and their first attempt at Molière on the 17th December, when Sir John Vanbrugh's version of *Le Dépit Amoureux*, called "The Mistake," was played to a vastly amused audience, gave promise of good results in this direction. The spirit of the author was not much in evidence in the actors' work, the majority having no particular affection for ingenuity and *finesse*, the leading characteristics of all French art; but in a crude, straightforward way the various personages were accurately enough shown in outline, and all without exception were played with an amount of conviction that rose at moments to intensity. The rich Charles the Second costumes—more of Mr. Fox's handiwork—were worn with grace and distinction, and when the audience became a little fogged by the elaborate complications of the dramatist, who in this play has prepared a very maze of entanglements, there were always figures of more or less beauty to gaze upon, and words of singular point and wit to listen to, so that nobody could feel exactly dull. The third, fourth, and fifth acts are, however, crammed to repletion with such rare comedy scenes, that it would be a marvel if, with actors of any pretensions to cleverness, they did not play to one long peal of laughter; and the Romany knowing their way about a stage with cunning not far behind the regular staggers, and boasting at least four actors, Mr. Trollope, Mr. Bright, Mr. Bathurst, and Mr. Fletcher, who can deal strongly with a strong scene, kept everyone very much alive during this portion of the play at any rate. Mrs. Charles Sim and Mr. W. R. Walkes managed some pretty playing in the course of the mock quarrel, though neither was really suited by the part, Leonora being but a scolding, shrewish heroine, and giving the clever actress little scope for anything but railing accusations, and the lover proving too slight and thin a character for the actor, whose deep voice and weighty manner more fit him for the Bancroftian *rôles* in modern pieces. Mr. Trollope and Mrs. Walkes were, on the contrary, quite happily cast. The one is an unctuous comedian, who has mastered the difficult art of saying a funny thing funnily, instead of ridiculously (oh, the gulf that lies between them!); the other as sprightly and alert a soubrette as even Robertson could have desired. Emotional exuberance and volcanic spirits were met by imperturbability and stolid quaintness, with the certain result that dramatic fire flashed from the encounter, and the famous quarrel proved the hit of the piece. Miss Mary Kingsley as Camillo wore her gallant's dress very prettily, declaimed her sorrows and longings in blank verse with skill and feeling, and made of the disguised heroine a very sympathetic figure, in which there was more than a touch of romance and poetry. Mr. Bright as Lopez was of invaluable service. His quick emphatic method at once gives character to a scene, and the comic intensity he can throw into the dullest situation is quite remarkable. Without his intriguing coward, the play would have

dropped considerably. Mr. Fletcher spoils many of his effects by a smallness of gesture, and a coat-and-waistcoat style that forbid illusion when he is labelled dare-devil and gallant by the author; but for these failings his Don Lorenzo would have been excellent, vigorous, well-timed, picturesque, admirably spoken throughout, and reaching in the last act the point of true and stirring passion. Mr. Bathurst as a hot-tempered and eloquent outraged father, played with excellent discretion, reaching his climax by well-marked artistic gradations. Mr. Platt in a sly, quiet manner quite his own, made of the pedant Metaphrastus a genuinely diverting personage; and Miss Harrison gave indications of marked light-comedy gifts as Isabella. With the best all-round amateurs thus giving in their adhesion to Shakespeare and his great rival, and making such a good fight of it, there should be less and less dread among audiences of the fate in store for them at amateur theatricals.

“Held by the Enemy” does not look a very promising play for St. George’s Hall and amateurs. Battles and conflagrations, the discipline of war, and all the touch-and-go incidents of a play dealing with such out-of-the-way events, are not for scratch performances on a stage destitute of the mechanism of melodrama. The Strolling Players attracted large audiences, nevertheless, on the 20th and 21st December, and despite a few awkward titters when a wall of newspapers was blown away by a shell, most of them seemed thoroughly interested in Mr. Gillette’s striking play. This no doubt was largely owing to the fact that Mr. Yorke-Stephens was responsible for the stage management, and had, of course, introduced the original business of the Princess’s production. The hand of the expert was especially noticeable in the scene in which Hayne’s body is brought out of hospital. Here the finest situation in the piece depends entirely upon management; acting is not required; and the natural deliberation with which the actors treated the incident, betrayed at once the skilful adept whose method Mr. Stephens was enabled to reproduce. Captain A. Fitzgeorge was easily first in the matter of individual excellence. The quiet dignity, unassumed force, and easy manner with which Surgeon Fielding went through his unsympathetic task, did the greatest credit to his ability and tact. Mr. Arthur Ayers, a robust actor of a good school, marred an earnest rendering of Colonel Prescott by one or two mannerisms of bearing and expression, which are apt to grow disturbing. He was forcible, though, throughout an arduous part, and played with great sincerity. Mr. Meade was so finished and natural in the one little scene he had, that there was ground for complaint in that less efficient actors had very much more to do. Mr. Lamb brought into full play all the command of light comedy manners and customs he has now some reputation for, and made Mr. Thomas Bean a very amusing companion; Mrs. Ayers, probably the most experienced amateur actress on the stage, following Miss Annie Hughes with great success in the character of Susan McCreery; and Mrs. O’Hagan playing Rachel with decided skill and a surprising readiness for calls upon her voice and gestures for emotional outbursts, in a very great measure effective and invariably clever in no ordinary degree. Mr. W. C. Yarborough rather underplayed the ridiculous old negro servant, whose attempts at self-sacrifice to slow music are beyond our sympathies on this side of the Atlantic; but for not yielding to the temptation of making him a leading feature, the actor is entitled to grateful commendation. A whole host of Captains and Colonels and Corporals were more or

less efficiently played by a variety of gentlemen who seemed under the impression that the Northern army in the Civil War had no chests, and looked—what no doubt they were—soldiers drawn from the desk and the stool. Mrs. Canninge once more gave a character portrait, cut in Bessemer steel, of the surely not so very, very hard-natured Euphemia McCreery; and for all who were working explosions and suffocating artillery discharges, behind the scenes, there can be nothing but the warmest praise, and the deepest sympathy.

The attitude of the enquiring play-going public, if there be such a body worth considering, towards the once famous comedy of "School" has been for some time that of the gentleman in "The Innocents Abroad" who would put that one fatal question, "Is he—er—dead?" The answer comes now, sharp and pat, from the *Anomalies* who first thrust their negative into the unmistakeable garments of a three nights' run at West Norwood, and then thrust it out into the world. No. Emphatically, no. But very much alive and seemingly none the worse for wear. And so as long as school days represent a time of serious castle-building, and very insignificant griefs, a time the majority would willingly exchange with the present, so long will its popularity continue. Teacup and saucer and milk jug though there be, everyone is more or less pleased with trivial details, and a view of life whose vastness can dazzle nobody; and of all plays this is the one to satisfy such unaspiring tastes. A school, too, presided over by such a pedagogue as Mr. Grout, scholastic to his boots and wagging forefinger, fearful with orotund voice and crushing manner, would win a smile from the flintiest-hearted Scrooge that ever forgot his youth, or thought the world a mint. We could accept philosophically, in the light of the inevitable jar, the pointless gibberings of a Krux more than usually at sea in a part no one has yet understood, or made much of—without ruining the simple tone of the play—and the feeble inconsequence of the genial Doctor's fanciful better-half. These were but the salt to serve as savour for the rarer dishes set before us; and let the faults be what they might, any evening would be made acceptable by the natural nonsense in Miss Maude's Naomi, a delightful mixture of the school-girl and the woman, and the sweet charm of Miss Thrupp's Bella, marred to some extent though each was by the sententious delivery of a too solemn Lord Beaufoy, who was evidently a Radical peer of the most uncompromising character, and the over deliberation of a Poyntz so terribly anxious to throw his whole weight upon every sentence, that Miss Maude's work was doubled in having to act up to him through speech and through silence. Mr. Claude Meller, cast for the thankless part of the Major Beau Pendennis Farintosh, worked hard to attract some sympathy for the old sinner's repentance, but able as this actor is, and exceptionally well suited as he was in this doddering fop, the audience could not accept at the author's estimate his theatrical conversion, and the well marked eccentricities of the earlier acts were all they would heartily respond to. A crowd of pretty school girls, and some charming scenery helped a success as pronounced as any the *Anomalies* have scored for some seasons, and Robertson will be further exploited before they bid him good-bye.

Every author you meet has never less than a drawer full of plays, anyone of which would, as a mere matter of course, be better from a

pecuniary, as well as an artistic standpoint, than the "Middlemen," and "Toscas," "The Gondoliers," and "Men's Shadows," that are taken into public favour for some inexplicable crank in the people's mind, that only a brain doctor could fathom and describe. It looks such an absurdly easy thing to write a play—no harder than acting, or making a speech, or reeling off a leading article. And yet so few can manage to write one that is good in any one's opinion but the author's. It must be because the authors are too brilliant. Some men you know *are* too brilliant to do simple things effectively. It is not everyone who can play blind-man's-buff, or lawn tennis, and be a credit to his host, and a thing of beauty to the guests. But how they shine in a political crisis, or when somebody else has done a really silly thing! Then there is scope for the genius that is oozing out at their pores. Which leads me to hint with all the delicacy in the world, that it is hard to understand why "Time Tries All" was written; and, when written, produced by the Surrey Strollers on the 16th ult. That Mr. Gordon Young can be pleasant and natural, and Mr. Stewart Young can handle a dangerous character without getting into serious difficulties, has been proved before; as also that there is strength in Mr. C. Spurling, grace in Miss Ada Robinson, and promise in Miss Bayne. If it was necessary to emphasise the fact, why not have chosen a worthier medium for conveying the impression? Lady Arthur Hill's operetta "The Lost Husband" embodies a humorous if not very original idea. The management of this is distinguished by no little dexterity, and the authoress's purpose is no doubt served in keeping her hearers laughingly engaged for half an hour. Miss Meta Russell, Mr. Charles Lankester, and Mr. Sydney Bennett were quite at home in words and music, and fully deserved the warm reception they secured.

"Is this the Jew that Shakespeare drew," was the perpetually recurring question at St. George's Hall on the 16th January, when the Tabard Pilgrims, under most distinguished patronage, drew a capital house to see "The Merchant of Venice," for the benefit of the Bank Clerks' Orphanage. What the reply ought to be it is not easy to say. Macklin's was, and so more competent critics than his have declared Henry Irving's. This was neither a red-haired monster nor a dignified martyr. Mr. Wallis indeed had thought out the character for himself, and arrived at a clear understanding of what Shylock should be; which idea he had proceeded to embody in a careful and consistent piece of acting. Intensity of feeling, and the subtleties of the marvellous study were beyond him, but superficial force and some eloquence of expression were not wanting. The chief merits of Miss Kathleen Tellek's Portia were the personal grace and melodious speaking that made her always a welcome figure on the stage. The Mercy speech in particular was delivered with genuine art, and the trial scene was played with surprising feeling for the dramatic undercurrents of emotion influencing Portia at this juncture. Mr. Montgomerie spoke Bassanio's lines with intelligence and point, but the man he pictured was a Dane surely, not a hot-blooded, impulsive, fervent Italian. Mr. Colley Salter as Launcelot Gobbo was precisely suited. Dry and curiously quaint in voice and manner, here was an actor framed by nature for the starved youth, and excellent he was, despite failings in elocution and a want of finish in the management of time-honoured business. Mr. Martin Cahill assumed with fair success the piping voice and broken bearing of old Gobbo, and Mr. Walter Tyrrel was respectable

as Tubal. Manliness and distinct enunciation commended Mr. Howard Revell to the favour of the audience as Antonio, and noble efforts to naturally adopt the bubbling spirits of Gratiano entitled Mr. Gordelier to respectful attention. Miss St. Lawrence was a pretty Jessica, and a crowd of nobles and followers made up a goodly show, for the fair outside of which Mr. Fox was once again responsible with some score or so of very handsome dresses.

“My Turn Next” and “The Cricket on the Hearth” formed the programme of the fourth performance of the Brunswick House Dramatic Club on January 13th. In the first mentioned piece Mr. H. C. Knight and Mr. S. Marsland were very energetic, and were certainly not without humour. Mr. E. Courtley will do better later on; Lydia and Cicely were played respectively by Miss E. Wells and Miss Lily Philips: they were both good. The “Cricket on the Hearth,” was very well played all round, and if any one character be singled out for mention, it should be the John Peerybingle of Mr. W. H. Edgeworth (whose pathos had the genuine ring), and perhaps the difficult part of Caleb Plummer of Mr. B. Newton.



Our Omnibus=Box.



MISS DECIMA MOORE, (a portrait of whom we append, with the kind permission of the proprietors of “The Lady’s Pictorial,”) at once established herself in public favour by the charm of her singing and performance in “The Gondoliers.” She obtained the Victoria Scholarship for singing at the Blackheath Conservatoire of Music in November 1887, having studied there with Mme. Rose Hersee. Miss Decima Moore made her *débüt*, in the strictest sense of the word, at the Savoy, Dec. 7th, 1889.

Miss Ella Banister first appeared in New York in 1886 as a member of Mr. Dion Boucicault’s company in the character of Phyllis Wetter, and next joined Miss Rosina Vokes’s management to play in “The Schoolmistress” and Esther Eccles in “Caste.” Miss Banister made her *débüt* in London at the Vaudeville,

January, 1888, in Robert Buchanan's play, "Fascination," and then gained experience when touring with Mr. Chatterton's company. Returning to the Vaudeville Miss Banister appeared as Lady Flutter in "Joseph's Sweetheart" (subsequently playing Fanny Goodwill in the same play when on tour with Mr. Thomas Thorne's company), and as Mary Mason in "The Old Home," and has resumed the character of Fanny Goodwill since the reopening of the Vaudeville in November last. Her next character will be that of Hetty Belford in Mr. Robert Buchanan's forthcoming play, "Clarissa." Endowed with many natural gifts, Miss Banister has improved her advantages by careful and persistent study, and her intelligent and sympathetic acting foretells for her a leading position in her profession.

On Saturday evening, the 18th January, the Playgoers' Club held their sixth annual dinner at the Criterion. Some eighty members sat down at 7.30 to one of those *recherché* repasts which do the Criterion such credit. After dinner came the real business of the evening. Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, President of the Club, proposed the toast of the Drama in a very humorous speech; this was responded to by Mr. Henry Arthur Jones in his most happy vein. Speaking on the Drama, Mr. Jones is in his element, and the members of the Playgoers' Club thoroughly appreciated his most appropriate remarks on this subject. Then followed toasts of the Playgoers' Club, the Press and the Chairman, the whole of the proceedings throughout being marked by a flow of pleasant *badinage* and lively discussions on theatrical topics. The latter part of the evening was furthermore enlivened by some excellent songs rendered in telling style by Messrs. F. C. Palmer, O. Sharpley and others. Recitations were also given by Messrs. F. Lindo, Leonard Howard, Cliff Keane, and George Montagu. The Playgoers may be justly proud of their club; since the time when it was founded in March 1884 by its energetic secretary, Mr. Heneage Mandell, it has had many vicissitudes, but this, its sixth annual celebration, can be reckoned as its most successful and brilliant landmark, and we trust it is the forerunner of many such.

Mr. Gordon Craig was born near London, and was educated at Bradfield College and in Heidelberg; is seventeen years of age, and made his first public appearance in London at Mr. Henry Irving's theatre, the Lyceum, September 28th, 1889, in Watts Phillip's play, "The Dead Heart," as Arthur de St. Valery, a performance that showed great promise.

TERENTIUS AFER PUBLIUS, ESQ.

20th January, 1890.

MY DEAR TERENCE,—

Since writing to you last I have been in divers places and witnessed many odd things. Amongst others I have been in love—fallen in love, as your Monsieur Now-a-days puts it without gallantry—an experience more cruel than the ganching of the Turks, and lapsed into elevating rhyme. It was at the H. ym. t Th. . . re, while gentleman L. . . rq. e was stultifying himself on the subject of a certain letter, that I became aware of my destiny, "in her blue eyes blending passion and power," standing amongst the press of curious *citoyennes*. Mr. T. pp. g wigged me most confoundedly for not attending to my duties, and my soul was humbled; but in the privacy of Number 7, Totterdown Buildings, that night my o'ercharged heart found relief in song:—

May nature speed to woo thee
 By lawn and hollow grove,
 The flowers lean unto thee,
 Nor life unkind subdue thee
 With scarcity of love.

May day its treasures bring thee,
 And when its sand hath run,
 The thrush to slumber sing thee,
 And every starlet fling thee
 The glory of a sun.

What do you think of it? Shall I fold it into a cordate billet, redolent of amber-seed, and bribe the usher of the court to slip it into the darling's hand? Ah, well! we of the profession had best remain single-hearted—single-breasted, as I have heard a gentle Gaul put it.

Were you present at the hundredth performance of "A Man's Shadow," dear boy?—up in the flies, of course. A strong piece, but too melodramatic for the nicer palate. The old school and the new play amicably into one another's hands here in the persons of Laroque and De Noirville, and the century-old cosmopolitan may judge of which merits the higher applause. What straining leaps the world has taken through the last decade of years! Our remote forebears fixed legs in stocks, our nearer granddads necks; it was only a question of ends, and which end was immaterial to Toryism so long as tradition was upheld. Tradition is its war-cry, and its respect is all for what its father said was good. But we of the new era are rebellious children; we wear low collars, and want to think for ourselves, and, as a consequence we find the old school of acting somewhat stilted in its tenets and hopelessly conventional. Not that it isn't sincere and solid in its way, but that it no longer reflects human nature—if it ever did. And one may certainly bend originality till it snap. I happened into the Goupil Gallery in Bond Street t'other day and had a peep at the Impressionists. A peep?—a blinded stare! "Lord, what fools these mortals be!" Here was enough good paint, Terence, to serve for the outside of the National Portrait Gallery—and all wasted. Wasted, say I? Perhaps not. There may be the nucleus of better things in the core of this garish muddle. A great power for good beat under the paint and enamel and ridiculous padding of Betsy Regina, as under the tinkling barber's bason of the Knight of the Rueful Countenance. An embryo art often lives in the products of diseased minds. But we who are the spectators! Well, let us trust that we 'learn in suffering' what our great-grandchildren may teach in song. In the meantime, perhaps, eccentricities and deformities lead us by crooked paths to the true lines of beauty. The venturesome art student of to-day no longer wears Phidias' fetish for phylactery. He has cast his cockle-shell loose from the ship of learned state, and is wandering in search of undiscovered countries. He is drunk with the strong wine of communism, and freethought, and desperation, and in his delirium he spoils good canvas with the distorted images of his brain. He has got "the sun in his eyes" (I crave no indulgence for the idiom with you, old toper), and he maudlinly finds a subject worthy of his brush in a public-house, or a street accident, or an ugly mess of heads in a music hall. Ye Gods, to what travesties of imagination has not Art condescended in the last few years! But she no longer reigns; she is supplanted by her younger sister Artfulness. And from the private studio to the scene-painter's atelier, it is all the same. The jugglery of artifice has hypnotised the drama, and forced it subordinate to her hand. It is the hand before the brain. Nowadays we don't ask What is a piece worth? but, How is it put upon the stage? Well, we run merrily on, like a clock without a pendulum, and we must keep winding, winding, or we run down, and there is an end of all things. Perhaps there is but one play enacting at the present moment in London that may claim rank in the category of legitimate drama; and for what reason? Because it is sympathetic; because it is truthfully emotional; because it is purely national and indigenous; because it reflects life without outraging possibility; because, embracing all these conditions, it is artistically balanced and complete. It is not a great play is "The Middleman," it runs on conventional lines mainly, and more than once shaves perilously an appeal to the Gods—but that of its character is perhaps inevitable; yet it is a solid, earnest piece of work, and most commendable in this age of Jack-in-the-box surprises. And what a satisfying Mr. Willard it is

in the leading rôle ! How he enters into the soul of the technical genius, and embues his every motion with pathetic life ! The stage has not seen a nobler performance for many a long day.* Well, "The Middleman" is a legitimate play, flaunting under the borrowed plumes of no foreign school, and why shouldn't we have more of the same sort ? Why, indeed ! The heart cries for a latter-day Goldsmith, a Goldsmith with all the rich mind-stores of an additional century supremely wealthy in knowledge and experience to draw upon, to rise and lead the drama by the hand. Is he in embryo yet, or in breeches, or perhaps *in petto, in nubibus* ? He didn't write "A Man's Shadow," though that is a capital work of its class—and so once more to its hundredth performance—a veritable treat, dear boy, though perhaps not much in your line. Everyone realised his or her best on this occasion from excellent manly Mr. Tree to Mistress Minnie slender-pins, the prodigy of histrionic babes. But my candle burns out, Terence : and, though it may seem odd to you, 10 to the pound at 4½d. is the deuce and all of a tax on the weekly stipend received by

Yours distantly,

THE CALL-BOY.

P.S.—*Apropos* of nothing, Terence, I was told lately of an engaging young Belgian who rendered *pâté de foie gras* liver of the ghost ! There is food for reflection for you !

New plays produced and important revivals in London from December 9, 1889, to January 18, 1890.

- Dec. 12 "Fool's Mate," original one act comedy, by Fred W. Broughton, *Matinée*. Toole's Theatre.
- " 14 "Our Bairn," farce in one act, by F. Hawley Francks. Town Hall. Kilburn.
- " 18^o "Master and Man," drama in four acts, by Henry Pettitt and G. R. Sims. Princess's.
- " 18 "A Friend in Need, A Friend Indeed," new one act comedietta by H. W. Capper produced by the Chandos A.D.C. St. George's Hall.
- " 19^o "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Shakespeare. Globe.
- " 19 "Man and the Woman," play in three acts, by Robert Buchanan. *Matinée*. Criterion.
- " 21^o "The Real Little Lord Fauntleroy." *Matinées*. Opera Comique.
- " 24 "In the Express," comedietta in one act, adapted from *En Wagon* by R. K. Hervey. Avenue.
- " 24^o "La Rose d'Auvergne," adaptation by H. B. Farnie of Offenbach's one act operetta. Avenue.
- " 24^o "The Field of the Cloth of Gold," burlesque extravaganza, by William Brough, set to new and popular music by John Crook. Avenue.
- " 24 "Dick Whittington and his Cat, or the Demon Rat, The Merchant's Daughter and the Charity Brat," pantomime by George Conquest and Henry Spry. Surrey.
- " 26 "Jack and the Beanstalk, or Harlequin and the Midwinter Night's Dream," pantomime by Harry Nicholls and Augustus Harris. Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.
- " 26 "Cinderella, Ladybird, Ladybird, Fly away Home," pantomime by Richard-Henry, Lyrics by Clement Scott. Her Majesty's.
- " 26 "Aladdin or the Saucy Young Scamp that Collared the Lamp," pantomime by Geoffrey Thorn. Grand.
- " 26 "Lady Godiva ; or St. George and the Dragon and the Seven Champions of Christendom," pantomime by William Muskerry. Sanger's Amphitheatre.

*If you please, pretty Miss Mary Blenkarn, in the scene where you bid farewell to your old home, and in your agony cry, Where shall you hide from your shame ? why don't you really crouch against those curtains in the L. C., and half clutch them about you, as if to hide yourself from yourself—from your future—from your tortured conscience ? Otherwise, good, very good.

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- Jan. 7 "A Sinless Secret," romantic five act drama, by Frank Lindo (founded on a novel by Rita). *Matinée*. Comedy.
- " " "Mademoiselle de Lira" one act play by Mrs. G. Thompson and Miss K. Sinclair. *Matinée*. Comedy.
- " 9 "Tra-la-la Tosca, or the High-toned Soprano and the Villain Base," new two act burlesque, words by F. C. Burnand, music by Florian Pascal. *Royalty*.
- " 11 "Worcester Fight," dramatic episode by Maurice Dalton and Ernest Genel. St. George's Hall.
- " 18 "Marjorie," English Comic Opera in three acts, written by Lewis Clifton and Joseph J. Dilley, music by Walter Slaughter.

In the Provinces from November 27, 1889, to January 16, 1890.

- Dec. 9 "Friendly Hints," new two act farcical comedy, by Frederick Bingham. Parish Hall, South Acton.
- " 9 "Twixt Love and Duty," original comedy drama, written in a prologue and four acts, by Joseph Worden and Robert Johnston. Theatre Royal, Preston.
- " 10 "Pedigree," new three act comedy, by C. C. Bowring and F. H. Court. Lecture Hall, Derby.
- " 13 "A State Secret," farcical comedy in three acts adapted from the German by H. Cassel and H. C. Duckworth. T. R. Burrow.
- " 16 "Clarissa Harlowe," new five act drama, by W. G. Wills. Theatre Royal, Birmingham.
- " 16 "Paola," new and original comic opera, in two acts, libretto by Harry Paulton and Mostyn Tedde, music by Edward Jakobowski. Royal Lyceum, Edinburgh.
- " 18 "Matamoras; or, A Night in Spain," romantic drama in one act, by Frank Desprez. Lyric Hall, Ealing.
- " 19 "A Bitter Repentance," original domestic drama in three acts, by William R. Samuels, produced by the Nottingham Histrionic Club. Sneinton Institute, Nottingham.
- " 20 "State Secret," farcical comedy in three acts, adapted by Messrs. Cassell and Duckworth from the German. Prince's, Bradford.
- " 24 "Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp; or The Willow Pattern Plate, and the Flying Crystal Palace," pantomime by Horace Lennard. Crystal Palace.
- " 27 "The Bishop of the Fleet," romantic drama in a prologue and three acts by C. F. Clarke and Frederick Mouillot. Londesborough Theatre, Scarborough.
- " 30 "The Pedlar; or, A Friend in Need," comedy drama in four acts, by Coleman Davies. Theatre Royal, Lowestoft.

1890.

- Jan. 3 "Editha's Burglar" original three act drama, by Mrs. Hodgson Burnett and Stephen Townsend. Bijou, Neath.
- " 16 "The Fisher Girl," original French-English drama, by Charles Haunan (copyright purposes). Ladbroke Hall.

In Paris from November 24, 1889, to January 15, 1890.

- Nov. 28 "Ali Baba," comic opera in three acts, libretto by Vanloo and Busnach, music by Lecocq. Eden.
- Dec. 3 "Riquet à la Houppe," (re-written and re arranged) fairy comic opera in three acts, libretto by Ferrier and Clairville, music by L. Varney. Folies Dramatiques.
- " 3 "L'Ombre D'Oscar," three act farcical comedy, by Charles Raymond. Théâtre Déjazet.
- " 7 "Gringoire, and Le Dépit Amoureux," M. Coquelin's *rentrée* at the Théâtre Français.
- " 10 "Tête de Linotte," three act comedy, by Théodore Barrière and Edmond Gondinet. Vaudeville.
- " 10 "Un Drôle," four act comedy, adapted from Yves Guyot's novel by Georges Bertal. Château d'Eau.
- " 14 "La Policière," six act drama by Xavier de Montépin and Jules Dornay. Ambigu.

- Dec. 17 "Shylock," adaptation in verse in three acts and seven scenes, by Edmond Harancourt of the Merchant of Venice ; incidental music by Gabriel Fairé. Odéon.
- " 18 "Le Mari de la Reine," three act operetta, by Grenet Daucourt and Octave Pradelo, music by André Messager. Bouffet.
- " 20 "Le Cadenas," comedy in three acts by Blum and Toché. Palais Royal.
- " 21 "Esther à Saint Cyr," comedy in verse in one act, by M. de Marthold. Odéon.
- " 21 "L'Annee Joyeuse," *revue* in three acts, by Milhec and Numès. Cluny.
- " 23 "Adieu Cocottes," vaudeville, in three acts, by Adolphe Jaime and Georges Duval. Dejazet.

1890.

- Jan. — "La Grande Vie," three act vaudeville by Henri Bocage and Pierre Decourselle. Nouveautés.
- " 3 "Jeanne D'Arc," drama in three acts and six scenes by Jules Barbier. Music by Gounod. Porte St. Martin.
- " "Armida," ballet in three acts, by Ferdinand Piatesi ; arranged by Balbiani. Music by Marengo. Eden.
- " 14 "Le Moulinard," three act, farcical comedy, by M.M. Ordonneau, Valabrègue, and Keroni. Palais Royal.
- " 15 "Hilda," one act comic opera, by Charles Narrey and Michel Carré, Jun. Music by Albert Millet. Opera Comique.



Reviews.

"*Acrobats and Mountebanks.*" By Hugues Le Roux and Jules Garnier, translated from the French by A. P. Morton. (London: Chapman & Hall.)

When a very youthful acquaintance of ours was catechised the other day as to what form the Devil took when he tempted Eve, he promptly answered, "a circus!" This would have tickled M.M. Hugues Le Roux and Jules Garnier, the pious apostles of *les banquistes*, into a little giggle and a "*peste*" for the undeserved satire ; for master baby's elders must learn now that the black cross long set against the generic title "acrobat," is in order to be wiped out, and Mr. Billy Hayden himself with his *confrères* to be invited from the scullery up to the first-floor of social respectability. In fact, all these ages we have mistaken the proper status of the gentleman of the "ring," and forthwith are we called upon to assign him his deserved position in the gamut of caste. The boxer, the showman, the sharp-shooter have all been hugged to the ample bosom of society, and now it is the mountebank's turn, and, at the bidding of Messieurs his affectionate historians, we may shortly expect to find him flinging somersaults under the gilded chandeliers in the *salon* of Madame La Duchesse. In the meantime, Messrs. Le Roux and Garnier introduce him to us, it must be admitted, in a dress novel and interesting enough. Their book is nothing if not original and instructive, and from it we learn many things of which we were ignorant hitherto—for instance that the gymnast is chaste ; that equilibrists are mostly neuropathic and susceptible to hypnotism, and that a midget smells like a grey mouse. It will be news, however, to the urban "Johnny" to hear that on the stage of *every* music-hall in London one will find "a curious chorus of men in evening dress, sitting in a semi-circle, their faces blackened with soot," while the rear is occupied by "dismal looking *claqueurs*, or professional applauders, who rattle castagnettes made of wood in the form of bones." This is a little exaggeration of facts not frequent in your pages—eh, Messieurs ? At any rate you have written us a charming volume, tellingly illustrated with a profusion of outline drawings, mostly from photographs, and lively with Gallic twists of fancy. We have room for only a couple of excerpts as earnest of your *espièglerie*, but these do no less honour to your authorships than to your able translator, Mr. A. P. Morton. The first

describes how Monsieur Hugues once ventured into a lion's cage in company with a certain tamer.

"'You must wait,' he said, 'in the entrance to the door until I call you.' He then entered the cage in a familiar way, and as the lion was asleep he pulled it by the ears. When the beast, who at first grumbled a little, was sitting up and seemed composed again, my companion called to me: 'Come in, now!' I went in cautiously at the back, taking two steps forward, so that I might still be nearer to the door than to the lion. I must own that the desert king did not honour me by even turning his head. He was talking to his tamer. The two gentlemen left me standing, and I looked rather like a bootmaker waiting for orders from a nobleman. Man is a coward. The lion's contempt gave me courage. I advanced a step so that I could touch the leg of the beast. 'Oh,' I said, 'how silky it is!' It was not silky at all; it was abominably harsh. Since then I have reflected upon the feeling which could have induced me to utter the falsehood, and the result of this self-examination is so humiliating that I will confide it to you as a penance. It fact, 'how silky it is' was prompted by an instinct of base flattery—a courtier's compliment—the toadyism of a coward who felt himself nearer to the lion than to the door."

The second is a poem by the merry-andrew, Clam, who sometimes "teased the muse."

"She is dead, the mummer gay,
With the powder on her face,
On her lips a merry lay,
Flowers nestling in her lace.
In her 'caravan' she lies
'Twixt empty bottles and wax lights;
Her mother decks her, rouge applies,
As though it were for her 'first nights.'
She waits until they raise the trap;
Three knocks the rising curtain hails;
She waits . . . alas! I hear them tap,
But 'tis upon the heads of nails."

Of course, as no French book is complete nowadays without its pinch on the arm of *perfidious Albion*, we hear that "England is the cruel country, where men first formulated the law of the 'struggle for life'"; but this we overlook, gentlemen, for the sake of your pretty wit.

"*The Lady from the Sea*," by Henrik Ibsen. (London: Fisher Unwin.)

The yearner after new literary sensations should buy this beautifully produced little volume, if he wants *sa fibre sensible* tickled at the outset by the straw of impressionism; for here we have in a breath the combined work of Mr. Unwin, Mr. Gosse, Master of Ceremonies, and—Ibsen; all poets in their way, and of the three perhaps the first not least. Which is the most important, the publisher, the illustrator, or the author—the tailor, the fitter, or the man? We know where in the trio posterity places the fourth George. We know the relative values of William Combe and Rowlandson, of Gilbert A'Beckett and Leech, of Harrison Ainsworth and Hablot K. Browne; but posterity hasn't dissected our Scandinavian yet. So we must sit quiet, and be thankful that he has come down to us dressed so prettily in the tag of our Hesperian banquet, like a child to desert, and smile at his playful gambols, and at the way in which he smears his own face, and ours, with fruit snatched from the dishes of the immortals. In the meantime, so far as his English admirers are concerned, the poet is fortunate in his showman here *en evidence*. As in the hundred-and-one cases where a skilful actor has made a dry stick of a play blossom by breath of genius, so are the instances numerous in which a forcible biographer has sanctified his subject by drawing on the rich stores of his own imagination, by finding motives where none was designed, by implying what *he* would have said or fancied in that other's place. Mr. Gosse announces the *Lady from the Sea* with a power of courtesy and a charm of words, that form a generous introduction for her ladyship and her supporters. On his recommendation we watch the curtain rise, figuratively, with some show of interest, and even palliate the tedious fooling of Ballested and the frisky *insouciance* of Bolette, in consideration of the riches to come. But presently we begin to wonder when all this tasteless gas is going to intoxicate our senses, when the rosy flesh, whereof a sensuous gleam has caught our eye in the introduction, will soften over the ribs of the skeleton. It never does: but, as some compensation we are lifted by-and-by

into the cold sweet clouds of romance, where the poet voices wander, coming faintly to our ears like the hum of bells from fairyland. *Sac à papious*, Henrik ! Stick to thy lyre, and give us more of thy dreamy Ellidas and fewer of thy dull Lyngstrands and Arnholms ; curb thy homilies and give rein to thy wilder song, blown down the slopes of the grey water like the large-winged birds that visit us fitfully from the northern lights, where the strange, sad language of man is seldom heard, and the solemn thunder of the sea sleeps in the motionless iceberg.

"*Memories of Fifty Years*," by Lester Wallack. (London : Sampson, Low & Co.)

These reminiscences of the well-known actor-manager will prove terribly disappointing to him who dives amongst the pages for pearls of wit or trenchant anecdote. He will come up gasping and treasureless. He will ask why he was induced to the hopeless quest ; and, indeed, fifty years would seem to have qualified Mr. Wallack as an autobiographist only to the extent of putting the experiences of a super or call-boy into cultivated English. There is nothing new in the book, either as regards the author's experiences, his stories, or his memories of the giants of his craft. He writes albeit from the standpoint of a sincere and kindly nature, and there is no touch of vulgarity in his style, or his editor's. The volume is excellently illustrated, and for this reason alone may be deemed worthy of embalmment by brother professionals in the archives of the stage.

"*Half-Hour Plays*," by Amabel Jenner. (London : Walter Smith & Innes,) and "*Plays for Young Actors*," by Amy Whynates. (London : Dean & Son.)

Are useful enough little volumes in their way, and well calculated to interest young wearers of the sock and buskin. The first-named is the better suited to the nursery ; the latter somewhat lacking simplicity.

"*The Christmas Box, or New Year's Gift*." (London : Field & Tuer)—"*The Bairn's Annual*," edited by Alice Corkran. (Same publishers.)

These are two pretty little reprints of familiar tales and carols illustrated from blocks originally executed in the days of our grandads. There are no friends like old friends, and these quaint cuts have a tender flavour about them that is not of the age. Assuredly, Miss Corkran is a capable editor, and Jack and Jill, sated with the rich food accorded their palates nowadays, should thank her for her simple, prettily-garnished dish.

"*In Chains of Fate*," by John Max. (Same publishers.)

Can scarcely be placed amongst the ordinary run of 'shilling dreadfuls,' touching as it does upon the religious problems of the day ; unless one might say the subject has become so hackneyed that it may on that account take a prominent place in the ranks of a fashion of literature which has been worn well-nigh threadbare. The villain commits the error of taking the reader into his confidence at the very outset, hence the unravelling of the plot becomes somewhat tedious, more especially as the vigorously-drawn frontispiece has already announced the fact that somebody (and probably not the hero) will eventually come to a bad end, and leave all to go "merry as a marriage bell."

"*Prince Goldenblade*," by Sir Gilbert Campbell. (London : Ward, Lock, and Co.)

This is a fairy tale of the modern school, brightly and frolicsomenely written, and just of a length to keep the young mind engaged throughout and to satisfy the adult palate. It is nicely produced, and has a few well-executed illustrations to break up its pages agreeably.

"*Holiday Sporting Stories*," by Finck Mason. (London : Trischler & Co.)

The brief tales here reprinted from the *Graphic* newspaper are neither very clever or very original ; but their author shows a breezy confidence in the treatment of themes grown long musty that appeals pleasantly to the good-nature of his reader. "The White-Faced Marc" is the best of the batch.



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OMEWHERE in his entertaining "Confessions" which deals with his directorship at the Comédie Française, Arsène Houssaye makes a shrewd remark with regard to the critical temper of modern audiences. "Tout en se quadruplant," he says, "le public est devenu meilleur pour les théâtres, mais détestable pour l'art ; aujourd' hui il prend tout ce qu'on lui donne. Vers 1850, il avait encore l'esprit critique : il jugeait, avec ses mains pour applaudir et des clés pour siffler . . . Aujourd' hui on est content de tout ; on donne cent représentations d'une pièce qu'on ne pourrait lire une seul fois."

"*Meilleur pour les théâtres, mais détestable pour l'art.*" These nine words go to the root of the whole matter ; and, though originally written of the Parisians, they have a peculiar applicability to English audiences at the present time. Our theatre-going public has enormously increased ; long and lucrative "runs" are the order of the day ; new theatres are springing up like mushrooms ; and everyone who does not wish to appear behind the times professes a lively interest in the dresses and acting of the ladies and gentlemen employed thereat. But for that critical spirit among playgoers which should determine a high standard—or at any rate a respectable standard of some sort—for the quality of the dramatic fare provided for them ; for any genuine recognition of the existence of a dramatic *art* ; or for any real anxiety for the welfare of the English stage as anything more than an after-dinner amusement, we may search among our theatre-going public with a miserable certainty of disappointment.

At the least, this is true of a very large proportion of playgoers in general. First-night audiences stand in a measure apart ; and the critical capacity represented by the independent and demonstrative portion of them, as apart from professional criticism, has lately on more than one occasion appeared in a favourable light by its bestowal

of immediate approval upon good work. And there is, no doubt, in the average audience a small leaven of playgoers who take an intelligent interest in the art they patronise. But of the great bulk of the public the foregoing remarks are only too true; and it would seem that anxiety for the future of the English stage as an artistic growth is limited at present to one or two dramatists who believe in the artistic nature of their calling, and a handful of playgoers who still have hope of the restoration of the national drama to a state of convalescence.

Some years ago, in one of his prefaces, Victor Hugo made a division of theatrical audiences into three classes: (1) the crowd, who look for action, plot, situations; (2) women, who expect passion, emotion; (3) thinkers, who hope for characters, studies of human nature. Had he been considering theatrical London of to-day he might have added a fourth, and very large class—those who go to the play because it is the fashion at present to be well versed in such matters; or because they wished to be amused or excited, without troubling their heads to consider the drama as anything more than a pleasant medium of titillation to the senses or emotions.

The general public having thus drifted into the condition in which, as M. Houssaye complains, it will take anything that is offered to it, it will scarcely be gainsaid that if certain of our managers are, financially as well as artistically, in a position to direct the public taste to an appreciable extent—and one, at least, of them is in such a position—they must be held to blame if they allow the standard of dramatic excellence to drop. A theatre is a speculation, and the necessity of making it pay will effectually prevent the production of plays that would prove caviare to the general. A play, however, need and should lose none of its capacity to interest or amuse by gaining in intrinsic worth; and if certain of our leading theatrical managers were to give a little less thought to scenic elaboration or opportunity for the display of individual histrionic powers, and a little more to the quality of what they produced, good plays—to view the matter in its least artistic aspect—might be made to pay.

Certain recent dramatic events have given a rude shock of disappointment to many who, having the welfare of the English stage at heart, had hoped that managers and audiences were at last making a step together in the right direction. This hope was prompted by the attention attracted by plays of such undoubted interest as “The Doll’s House,” “Wealth” (although dramatically both of these were unsatisfactory), and “The Profligate,” the last a play infinitely more satisfying to the artistic sense than either of the former. But all at once there appears the lamentable fact that this one step up the slippery hill of progress has been immediately followed by two steps down again, or rather by a sudden slide to what is perilously near the bottom. Mr. Tree, at the Haymarket, follows “Wealth” with an adaptation of a successful French melodrama,—powerful, it is true, and affording the clever actor-manager an excellent acting part, but a play of an eminently “stagey” type, having for its main idea a mere *rechauffé* of that of “The Lyons Mail.” Mr. Hare, at the Garrick,

produces a translation of Sardou's worst melodrama to counteract the elevating influences of "The Profligate ;" and at the Lyceum, where, though Mr. Irving has done nothing to further the advance of contemporary dramatic literature, we have come to look either for Shakspeare, or for plays of a high standard of excellence, an equal measure of disappointment awaits us. For "The Dead Heart," when stripped of the glamour which attaches to Mr. Irving's personality and his elaborate method of production, is nothing but a crudely constructed and poorly written melodrama of the second or third rate.

What, then, has become of the Dramatic Art of which successful managers are ever ready to profess themselves the champions? And where are the artistic aspirations of the patrons of the Drama? If our leading managers were ever really in sympathy with such aims, or if their audiences ever really looked upon the drama as anything more than a toy, why is all this desirable enthusiasm stifled under the depressing effect of such plays as those now running at our chief theatres? An explanation—but not an excuse—is easy. A theatre is a speculation, managers are but human, and perhaps we expect 'too' much from them. It is their business to make their theatres pay, and for plays to succeed they must hit the public taste.

"A Man's Shadow" draws enormous houses, the public has shouted in excited approval at the butcherish horrors of "La Tosca," and the booking at an early period of the run of "The Dead Heart" was said to be heavier than at the corresponding period of that of "Macbeth." This, our managers may urge, shows that it is plays of this type that the public most appreciates; plays that are exciting, theatrical, overlaid with elaborate decoration, and (we can imagine our manager adding from behind the back of his hand) which constitute a convenient and not too obtrusive setting for the acting of a clever performer and established favourite.

Before the managers are allowed to cast the burden of blame upon the public taste, we must bid them consider what is the real reason that the public will go in crowds to see plays of the type of "The Dead Heart." In the first place, there are certain theatres to which a very large number of people will pay their periodical visit, no matter what be going on there—short of an absolute failure; and as it is becoming more and more the fashion to be well posted in matters dramatic, this reason has an ever increasing force. Again, the great majority in these audiences does not go to see a piece once or twice because it thinks it a good play, but because it admires the powers of some particular actor, or the scenic effects introduced. A sense of the contrast afforded, even by these plays, to the colourless monotony of the life of our workaday world induces many; while at the present time probably one of the most powerful, though less recognised factors in the matter, is the still greater insufficiency of a large proportion of the dramatic entertainment offered elsewhere.

Setting aside those houses where comic opera, burlesque, or pantomime is being presented, out of thirteen of our leading

theatres melodrama now occupies five; farcical comedy, four; comedy proper, two (in one of which cases we are re-introduced to an old friend); a Shaksperian revival, one; and a contemporary drama of interest, *only one*. That is to say, the playgoer who is weary of glaring melodrama, and does not always want to see farcical comedies, has his choice limited, alike in the matter of comedy and "drama," to two plays. In each case, one of the two is a revival; hence a further limitation. The net result at present is only one original contemporary play—I refer to "The Middleman"—which has the power to interest as well as entertain, by means of sketches of character and pictures of human nature such as are hoped for by Victor Hugo's "Thinker," as well as by dramatic effect. Interest of an archæological and picturesque kind there doubtless is in "The Dead Heart" and "La Tosca"; but not all the charm of Mr. Irving's, Miss Terry's, and Mr. Bancroft's acting, not all the cleverness of Mr. Tree's dual impersonation, not all the gorgeousness of Mr. Hare's scenery, or the excitement of Mrs. Bernard-Beere's histrionic method, can prevent the plays now running at their respective theatres from appearing as the inartistic and insufficient melodramas that they are. And it is these theatres which should educate the public taste! Oh, great British Public, what things are done in thy name!

If the affection of the public has been estranged from good plays, it is the lack of opportunity for witnessing them that has brought about this result. Did the plays usually presented to it possess any intrinsic worth, the public taste would never have become as vitiated as the managers must suppose it to be. And if this vitiation of taste is a fact, it is the managers and authors who must share the blame. Were the latter to consider *quality* in writing plays, and the former in selecting them for production, good plays would soon be as popular as showy melodramas, and would prove as safe a speculation. Obviously, it will not do to fly at once over the heads of audiences; but there is very little reason to fear that an appreciable refinement in the public taste could be gradually brought about by such means. The deserved popularity of "The Middleman"—which, in spite of the conventionality of its first and last acts, is a piece of thoroughly good work—is a case in point. Here we have a play strong in dramatic interest, full of effective situations, and at the same time strong in human interest; it is written with no small amount of attention to style, and it is a popular success of the most decisive kind.

Still more pertinent as an example is the case of "The Profligate." In that play a difficult subject of great interest was treated with a very fair measure of success; it was an excellent acting play; and the literary style of the dialogue was such as has not been heard in contemporary drama for many a day. It can hardly be supposed that the warmest upholders of the present Lyceum and Garrick policy will maintain that, in the matter of cultured interest, "The Dead Heart" and "La Tosca" are to be compared with these two plays.

Surely all this points to the fact that, when it is given the chance, the public will prefer something better than glorified transpontine melodrama, and discounts the force of the managers' plea that they are endeavouring to meet the public taste. It shows, moreover, that the pretended sympathy of certain managers with the dreams of dramatic enthusiasts has very little substantial existence, and vanishes strangely before the power of the "policy of the pocket."

As things stand at present, the remedy must proceed from the audience. As long as a theatre is a private enterprise, it is a business speculation; and although, as has been said, one at least of our managers is, financially as well as artistically, in a position to direct the public taste, and although more than one might easily and safely show a more real anxiety for the honour of the English stage, still it seems unlikely that we shall ever see the initiative coming from the management, until the Endowed Theatre, of which some of us dream, is an accomplished fact. Until then it becomes the more imperatively the duty of the public—or of that part of it that cares to trouble itself about the life of the drama—to recover something of the critical spirit, and refuse to accept at our leading theatres plays which are below even the standard which those theatres have already set up for themselves.

It may perhaps be urged that we are at an experimental stage with regard to English drama; that we do not exactly know what we want; and that it is the necessity of a *corpus vile* to experiment upon, that lays the present generation of playgoers open to the charge of such vagaries of taste as an equally enthusiastic reception of "The Profligate" and "La Tosca"; that we have tried social drama, realistic drama, ethical drama, and even medical drama, and cannot make up our minds what we will have for the drama of the future. Our answer, I think, must be that we are making these experiments in search of *interest*, and that it must be the interest of plays, rather than their power of merely entertaining, that will regulate their standard of quality in the minds of thoughtful playgoers. Variety we shall always wish for in our theatres; but as far as the "serious drama" is concerned, it seems clearly to be the duty of those who love the dramatic art to insist that a play shall have some backbone of interest and some pretension to literary style.

Until we can get more dramatists to give us plays of this description or more managers willing to produce them, it would be better even to risk the loss of a little dramatic effect for the sake of artistic interest—as in the case of "Wealth"—than that one drama should lose all pretensions to interest except in the matter of theatrical display, as has been its fate in the case of certain examples now before the public. Since, however, we have recently had an example, in "The Profligate," of the possibility, even in our "dying drama," of combining dramatic effect with literary excellence, there is all the more justification for protest against the sudden defection of those who

should have been readiest to help in the endeavour to present the English drama with a new lease of life.

[Since the above was written it has become evident, from the managerial advertisements, that "La Tosca" has not proved to possess the powers of attraction that seemed to be augured by its original reception. Mr. Hare, however, adheres to his "foreign" policy; and, although he has in his possession at any rate one charming English play which has been tried at a *matinée*, prefers to occupy the boards of the Garrick, until Mr. Pinero's new work is ready, with another adaptation from the French. Still, as we are thereby to be afforded the opportunity of seeing Mr. Hare in a congenial part, we must stifle our grumbles, for his finished art can ill be spared. A more significant fact is that he holds in reserve two important French plays—"L'Abbé Constantin" and "Belle Maman"; while Mr. Tree has recently acquired the rights of another French success. To be forced into competition on such unequal terms is scarcely encouraging to native work.]



Farewell ! But Not Good-bye !

(*A Song of Friendship.*)

BY CLEMENT SCOTT.



FAREWELL ! but not Good-bye ! let no despair
 Mar the memorial of our love to-night !
 Fill up the Stirrup Cup ! Luck fills the air
 That gently waits to waft you out of sight !
 Not from our hearts—there ever you remain
 Enshrined, the secret's ours of where or when ?
 We part, alas ! but we shall meet again
 The truest Comrade, and the best of Men.

Man of the merry heart ! how we shall miss
 The kindly crew with whom you've cheered life's stage ;
 The peeping Pry ! sweet Caleb's gentle kiss !
 The youthful Spriggins ! Garner bowed with age !
 How we shall long for one more grasp of hand,
 When fades the ship, and cheers in distance die !
 God speed you, Johnnie ! to that lovely land
 We lend our best ! Farewell ! but not Good-bye !

Farewell ! but not Good-bye ! Remember well
 Though fate may sever, time can still restore !
 The Parting Hour has come ; its cruel knell
 Will clash in Welcomes on yon friendly shore !
 Our loss, when we are parted, will be gain
 To hearts in hundreds, who await to greet
 Our King of Kindliness ! White snows of pain
 Will melt in flow’rs of friendship at your feet !

Round English hearts like ivy you have clung,
 Love has no test that has not found you true !
 Grey time, that whitens heads, has kept you young,
 And grief that bows men down, has chastened you !
 One Bumper more at parting, brimmed with wine !
 The voice may falter, tears may dim the eye.
 One Song of Friendliness, for Auld Lang Syne !
 Farewell, old friend ! Farewell ! but not Good-bye !

12th February, 1890.

[Recited by MR. HENRY IRVING at the Farewell Dinner given to MR. J. L. TOOLE previous to his departure for Australia.]



“Mal’ Occhio.”

(A Story in Two Parts.)

BY FRANCES ALLSTON.

I.



HOT July night ; the air stifling and oppressive. There is a full moon, and the brilliant light throws its glamour over the suburban garden. The great elm trees seem asleep in their absolute stillness, and the silence is only broken by the sound of a passing train in the distance, and by the tender, melancholy chimes that float down from Hampstead.

It is long past midnight, but the two girls who are seated at the open window are in no hurry to go to bed. They have taken off their pretty evening dresses, and in all the comfort of loose wrappers, have settled down for a confidential chat. At first sight it would seem impossible for friendship to exist at all between natures evidently so widely different. Dora Lynn, exquisitely pretty, fair-haired and dainty, constantly shocks the dignified Hilda by her fondness for slang, her keen delight in flirtation, and her frankly material views of life. Her enemies term her “bad

form," her friends lament her ways, and finding expostulation useless, comfort themselves with the assurance that there is no real harm in her.

She has just concluded a vivid description of the man to whom she is at present engaged.

"I really mean to settle down now. I have had a very good fling. Why don't *you* get engaged, Hilda? It's very nice, really. I often think how much better it would be for you to have a home of your own, than to go on as you do now. One thing is, I think the men are a little bit afraid of you; you do snub them so. I've watched you. You never thaw to them a bit, and they won't stand that sort of thing now. They expect to be made up to."

"I should never condescend to make up to any man!"

"Then you'll never get married, and it *is* such a pity! It does not matter so much now. You have such a glorious voice, and you are working your way up in the profession. But suppose you were ill and couldn't sing! What would you do then? You would have to stop at home with those depressing people of yours, and how would you like that?"

"Oh! don't *talk* of it, Dolly!"

"Well, then, why don't you marry? You are awfully nice-looking. Yes, you *are*. I am not buttering. Your eyes are lovely, so dark; and you have such long lashes, and then your hair grows so prettily, and your figure is beautiful. If only you would not look so mysteriously sad, and if you would thaw a little when a man speaks to you."

"I am not interested enough to thaw to the ordinary men I meet."

"But at least make yourself more pleasant. You used not to be so 'stand-off-ish' years ago. What became of that little doctor who was so very civil to you at the Maxwell's?"

"Didn't you hear? didn't they write and tell you?"

"No. What? what was it?"

"He died, five years ago."

"Oh, dear! I *am* so sorry! poor fellow! what did he die of?"

"Diphtheria. He took it from a patient he was attending."

"Anyone could see he worshipped you. Were you *very* grieved, Hilda?"

"I was, indeed. It was a terrible shock to me."

There was a pause. The chimes rang out; a falling star shot across the sky.

"You had so many men civil to you in the old days," Dolly went on. "There was that Mr. Lester, that tall, dark man, who used to watch you when you sang with the most adoring expression. Is he married?"

"He is dead, dear."

"Dead! *that* man! why he ought to have lived to a hundred! What did *he* die of?"

"He was drowned."

"Good heavens! how unlucky! this is rather a ghastly

catalogue. It reminds one of Mr. Peggotty in 'David Copperfield.' Let's see! who were your other flirtations? Oh! Captain Blake; how could I forget him! Where is he now?"

"Oh, Dolly! for heaven's sake don't ask after any more people!"

"What! is *he* dead, too?"

"He died in India two years ago."

Dolly looked scared.

"Poor old darling!" she said, kissing her friend's soft cheek, "I *am* sorry. Don't let us talk of it any more. Let's talk of "Claudian" again. Wasn't that earthquake dreadful? I was so afraid I should scream. I know I shall dream of it to-night—"

Hilda had got up and began to walk restlessly to and fro.

"Sit where you are, Dolly," she said; "I want to tell you something."

"Yes, what is it? Is anything wrong?"

"No—at least I don't know. I want you to tell me what you think. It is a horrible idea that has been growing in my mind for a long time. I *must* speak of it to someone. It is that wretched play to-night that has brought it back to me so strongly. Dolly, do you believe it is *possible* for anyone to have the 'evil eye,' as they call it? You have read of it, of course, haven't you?"

"I have read something about it somewhere, I forget where. Isn't it a superstition that people come to grief when the 'evil eye' looks at them?"

"Yes; the owner of it may be perfectly innocent of any wish to harm, but wherever he goes, misfortune follows—"

"Like Claudian?"

"Like Claudian . . . Dolly, could such things be, do you think? Sometimes it strikes me with unspeakable horror; could I have any fatal effect on people? No, don't interrupt me, let me tell you everything, even if you are afraid to have me for a friend afterwards."

"You remember the Gordons, how fond they were of me, how good they were to me? of course you heard of poor old Gordon's bankruptcy, and how he cut his throat, and how his poor wife died of grief?"

"Yes, but what—"

"Wait a little. You remember old Mrs. Brooks? I was to have gone to live with her, and to have been like her own daughter."

"And she was killed in that dreadful railway accident!"

"Let me go on. I must tell you of a curious thing that happened some time back. It was when we were living at Blackheath; you remember that pretty old-fashioned house we had there, overlooking the heath itself? Well, one Easter Monday, there was the usual swarm of holiday-makers up there, and we stopped indoors, as we always did on those days. You know what rough play goes on on Bank Holidays; one could not well go out.

"It was a glorious clear bright day with brilliant sunshine, a cold blue sky, and a sweeping east wind. I was looking out of the dining-room window, when some Italians came up the path; two

men and a girl. The men carried those pipes, something like bag-pipes, you know, and looked picturesque enough in their national dress. But the girl I have never forgotten. She had the sweetest little face; lovely velvet-brown eyes and superb teeth. But it was beauty of expression even more than beauty of colouring, that made her so strikingly lovely. I never saw any human being so radiant with the fire and joy of life and youth as this young thing. She was about sixteen, I should think, and to see her dancing there in the sunshine with such brightness and grace, smiling and kissing her little hands to the people! oh, Dolly! it was so pretty, and so sad, too. It gave me such a passionate feeling of melancholy. Poor child! I wonder what her fate was! Doesn't it touch you always to see anyone at a very bright and beautiful moment of life, and then to know that soon——"

"Hilda, you *do* amuse me. You were always such a romantic individual. I *never* go in for any emotion like that. To get sentimental over a beggar-girl dancing would never occur to me! Of course we've all got some 'nasty jars' to expect, but the thing is, to get the most out of life you can, and not to spend one hour disagreeably that you can enjoy yourself in. That's my maxim. Well, go on; what was the end of the girl?"

"Oh, that I don't know, I never saw her again. But what happened was this. I felt so drawn to her, I went to the street door and beckoned to her. She came, with that beautiful glowing smile that only Italians have, I think. I had half-a-crown in my pocket; I put it in her hand. She thanked me profusely "*Mille grazie, signorina, mille grazie!*" but as she looked at me, her face clouded over with a curious expression of fear and repulsion. I glanced at the two men; they were watching me with the same strange look. I distinctly heard one say to the other "*Mal' occhio.*" The other nodded. Then I saw them—yes, Dolly, I saw them hold their hands out towards me in a strange way—like this—and then turn and spit on the ground."

"Nasty fellows!" ejaculated Dolly, "I hope the pretty little dancer didn't, too."

"She crossed herself as she joined them. I ran back quickly to the window; she was showing the money, they were all three talking eagerly. They came to some decision at last. The girl danced up the path again, waving her tambourine and smiling, not quite so brightly, though. Presently I heard a sound in the letter-box as if something had been dropped in it. The men moved off; she ran quickly down the garden and joined them, and then she, too, made that strange gesture with her hand, and turned and spat on the ground."

"Why that was for luck, of course."

"But when the postman came, and I went to the letter-box for the letter, the half-crown was there. She had returned it. Now, wasn't that strange?"

"What is much more strange is, that a clever woman like you should be so ridiculously weak-minded! Really you *astound* me!

I have always looked up to you as a practical and sensible person in most things, though you have that dreadfully romantic tinge in your composition that will get you into hot water some day, I'm afraid. But I never would have *believed* that you could be so feeble, so cowardly, and so superstitious! Yes, you deserve all that, and much more. Because some ignorant peasants, hardly better than animals, behave in that insane way, you allow yourself to be influenced by their idiotic superstition. I am ashamed of you. I can't tell you how you have gone down in my estimation. Now, *promise* me you won't let this absurd idea rest in your mind any longer."

Hilda looked inexpressibly relieved by her friend's common-sense view of the case, but she still seemed reluctant to quit the subject.

"It *is* very silly, I know," she said, "only I am glad I have told you; it is a relief. It has been a haunting idea with me for a long time, but I never realised what a grip it had on me till I saw "Claudian" to-night. I *promise* you I will dismiss it from my mind whenever I feel it creeping on me—there!" drawing along breath—"now let us talk of something else."

"I want to talk about *you*. I want to know what your plans are. I wish you would marry, too. I am sure you'd be happier with a home of your own, and a nice man to take care of you. You could sing to him in the evenings. That would be much better for you than careering all over the country as you do now, on those horrid provincial engagements. And then when you go home it is so comfortable for you, such a 'house divided against itself.' Are things any better lately?"

"Worse."

"I wonder you can stand it. No wonder your nerves are unstrung, and you get such absurd fancies. I *wish* you could marry! . . . I hardly dare ask what became of Leonard Marston. He didn't die, too, did he?"

"No! he has just come home again."

"Have you seen him?"

"I met him the other night at a musical party."

"Well! Was he pleased to see you?"

"*Very* pleased."

"What are you smiling to yourself for? Was he very attentive? Do tell me."

"Well, yes, he was."

"Now tell me the truth. Is he as much gone on you as he was before you refused him?"

"I think—yes—I am *sure* he is."

"Then why on earth don't you hold out the olive branch and make him propose again? He is such a nice fellow, I'm sure you'd get on well with him. You see when you refused him you were so mad over this craze for singing in public."

"Yes, at that time I *was* mad. I thought of nothing else. I had a perfect horror of domestic life. Now, of course, I am to a certain extent disillusionised, and often—yes often and often, I do long for

the love and companionship of a man I could respect and rely on."

"Leonard Marston, in short? I can see it is. Well, then, go in for him at once. Now don't be a donkey and let him slip. Have you seen the Marstons lately?"

"It is rather strange. They have come to live near us."

"Then of course you will call upon them?"

"No, dear, I couldn't do that."

"Oh, how you irritate me, Hilda! If I were in your place, I'd call like a shot. Well, all the same, I believe it will come right in the end. You'll write and tell me how it goes on, won't you? I'll bet you a dozen pair of gloves, you are engaged to him before two months!"

"Don't be rash."

"Oh, I know I shall win if you will only play your cards properly. Is he altered much?"

"He has improved; he is broader, he has grown a beard. He is much more self-possessed. He is really a bit of a hero, now, you know, and is very much sought after."

"That sounds nice. Now mind, when I come to stay with you in the autumn, I shall expect to hear it is all settled. And if you dare to go brooding over that absurd idea about the 'evil eye' again, you'll deserve to die an old maid! Now good-night, darling. You'll *never* tell anyone anything I have told you, will you? Of course I know you won't. 'Hilda Marston,' it will sound charming. Good-night."

(To be continued.)



Serenade.

(From "Songs of Sentiment, modelled on the style and choice of the modern drawing-room ballader
—with appropriate illustrations.")

II.



HAVE come through the wind and
the sleet,
To stand 'neath thy window-pane,
And call to thee, oh my sweet,
From the cold hard stones of the
street—
But in vain—but in vain.

The night bears my faint voice away,
No light in thy chamber gleams ;
I am weary and weak, my fay,
And would warm my heart till day
In thy beams—in thy beams.



She hears not my pas-
sionate cry,
Who smileth in rosy
sleep ;
One last appeal will I
try—
Here, cooky, get up—
for I
Am the sweep—am
the sweep !



Dust-Lore.

BY MAGDALEN BROOKE.



HERE lives a learned and reverend doctor of the Church who once upon a time gave the sanction of his name, his editorial labours, and his comments, to a compilation of stories of the supernatural ; and a truly comprehensive sanction it was.

No bigoted adherence to the marvels of any especial form of faith, no narrow-minded craving for evidence, no leaning towards the elaborately scientific elucidations of the Psychical Research Society, or any other society for the protection—or the prevention—of ghosts, “spooks,” and the supernatural in general, gave the reverend spectre-hunter pause. All was fish that came to his net, and whereas the ordinary attitude of the ordinary mind towards ghosts is that the burden of substantiating their supposed appearances—the business of embodying them, so to speak—lies with the person professing to have enjoyed, or otherwise, their visitations, the aforesaid writer apparently held that any claim, even the slightest, to any event having a supernatural character, justified and proved itself, and needed no more than its originator’s word to be held worthy of implicit belief.

From the dear, old creepy ghost of childhood, whose easily fulfilled, if not reasonably explainable, function seemed to be of no more psychical a character than by the expenditure of a little blue light and a good deal of unnecessary noise to frighten his survivors into fits, if not into qualifying as members of his own ghostly fraternity ; from this elementary spectre even to the latest alleged miracle at Lourdes ; from the Witch of Endor to the faithless lady of later days, the touch of whose deceived and deceased lover’s spectral fingers on her wrist in the dead watches of the night left an inerasible mark—the author runs the gamut of ghosts ancient and modern, respectable or the reverse, either from a personal point of view or from the evidence of their re-appearance in the glimpses of the moon, with a child-like faith in all alike, universal and indiscriminating as that of the old woman, who, on being adjured on her death-bed by her spiritual adviser, to profess her belief in the doctrines of the Church, replied vaguely, “ Yes, father, yes ; I believe them all, whether they’re true or not ! ”

It is a long way from a book on things supernatural to a phase of art both in literature and painting, one of whose foremost doctrines is that the supernatural does not exist ; and yet a certain fanciful

analogy may be traced between them, since both are the outcome of a shifting of the ordinary and received points of view. For as the aforesaid divine pins his faith on the supernatural view of life—and with what determination he does so may be gathered from the fact that in this latter end of the nineteenth century he inclines strongly to deplore the repeal of the acts against witchcraft—so the realist and impressionist in literature and art—he, at least, who carries his theories to their logical conclusion—pins his faith to what can only be described as the doctrine of the beauty of ugliness, the goodness of badness, the virtue of vice.

A step further and vice becomes the only virtue; crime, still more the criminal, if not the only, at least by far the most interesting, object in existence. Yet another step further, and these things may be held the only legitimate domain of fiction or art, and the rakings of this moral refuse and garbage the only savour sweet in the nostrils of its authors.

It is the modern cult of the dustbin.

It is not to be denied that diligent groping amongst the unsavoury contents of that useful household depository may result at wide intervals in the triumphant discovery of an overlooked silver spoon. Equally undeniably, by persistent groping in 'moral refuse one may—nay, must—in time chance upon a bit of silver or gold; it may be, a very diamond. But the process will not have rendered us the sweeter or cleaner.

It is the revelling in the dust itself that is the danger.

The chronicles of a cancer hospital may—nay, do—tell a tale of piteous suffering often borne with noble fortitude, of skill and sympathy, and tender care, and self-sacrificing service amongst sights and sounds and the pitiful humiliations that flesh is heir to, fitted to scare all but those whose hearts are strong in virtue of their tenderness; but a chronicle devoted solely to these terrible and nameless miseries, gloating over horrible physical details and agonies, would be but unwholesome reading. In such chronicle let them fall into their proper place as the background of the picture of heroic deed, the setting of the jewel of human virtue, and the healthy mind feels both the pity and the beauty of it.

It is the persistent dwelling on the agony and horror to the exclusion of the other side of the picture—as true and far sweeter—wherein lies the danger.

Ignorance is not innocence, and it is good for us all to acknowledge the existence of evil and ugliness, if only that we may strain and struggle to add our mite to the work of its removal; but at the same time it will hardly be denied that a too constant dwelling on the darkerside—an uninterrupted study of vice and the lower instincts of humanity—has a tendency in many minds not so much to cause a revolt against the unwholesome diet as to produce a relaxing of the moral fibre, a tolerance not only of the criminal but of the crime, as well as a confusion of the moral sense, which is apt to result in the acceptance of the theory that vice and brutality and low

aim are so inherent in human nature, and so universal, that it is scarce worth while to lift *one* feeble voice in protest against it, seeing that the general clamour of dissent must inevitably drown its sound.

Heaven forbid we should close the fountains of pity and sympathy for the sinner, since Heaven only knows by what slight and impalpable threads we ourselves may perchance have been held on the hitherward side of his particular sin, while he may still excel us in a hundred virtues; but let it be pity and sympathy because it *is* sin, and therefore to be deplored—not a twisting of the ugliness of the sin into something beautiful for that very same reason.

To recognise that in art beauty is no fixed quantity, one need do no more than compare the large-eyed, taper-fingered lady of the Book of Beauty era, with her “delicately-chiselled” features—the very description of which is out of date, since by general consent art-critics have substituted “modelled” for the older term—her drooping ringlets and impossible waist and shoulders, with a modern “impression” of one of her descendants.

What would that elegant simperer have thought of a beauty whose claim to notice consists of a face apparently smeared so hastily on the canvas that there was no time for more than indicating the features; whose eyes are a couple of darker dabs, while another smear of colour clothes the modern beauty in very different style to the fashionable or classic robes of her prototype; the effect of the whole picture being as that of an object seen by a short-sighted person who has forgotten his spectacles.

The painter avers that this is how he sees nature, and we are bound to believe him—and pity both him and his model. Nay, have we not lived to see—not only to see but to hear extolled as a master-piece—Venus herself, the Queen of Beauty, the mother of love, pictured as a plain and attenuated, not to say scraggy, girl of fourteen or so, who looks ill-fed enough to accept Paris’s apple from motives of hunger, if that beauty-loving young man had not felt impelled to reverse his ancient decision at sight of her and withhold the prize?

If these be the triumphs of the modern quest for Beauty, where are we to look for ugliness?

No; if you want realism—if the shimmer and gloss of the heap of embroidery silks in the shop-window, undeniably beautiful as they are, does not utterly content your sense of colour; if the human form divine as you pass it in the garb of modern life does not entirely satisfy your sense of outline, go to the National Gallery, where but a very small percentage of so-called educated people ever go—go to the National Gallery, and in the portrait of a tailor by one Giovanni Battista Moroni, shall you see realism, the realism which is the very essence of nature.

Look at that olive face, those dark living eyes, that capable hand; consider that attentive, waiting air, and you shall behold a man as he lived and breathed, soul and body so inseparable that in painting one the painter needs must paint the other, just because he was a great artist and studied nature at the source, unencumbered by theories





MISS OLGA BRANDON.

"Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win,
By fearing to attempt."

MEASURE FOR MEASURE, Act I, Sc. 5.

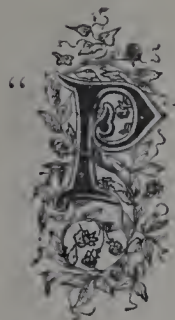
of how she *ought* to be looked at; and standing before that noble picture you shall feel that as long as the canvas lasts, out of it shall look to entrance the spirit of the beholder, the very essence of the spirit that informed those dark eyes; and you shall thank God that in days long gone by, but present with us still through the fire of genius, there lived an unnamed, dark-eyed man and a painter named Moroni.



Round-the-Fire Stories.

III.—“DEATH OR GABRIELLE.”

BY BEVIS CANE.



“PARDON me,” said the Count, “I purpose marrying her myself.”

“Pardon me,” said the other very coolly; “I hold all the honours.”

The Count advanced and took Monseieur le Capitaine gently by the lapel of his coat.

“For many years,” he said, “we have been what the world calls ‘friends.’ Let us be what Heaven calls ‘friends.’”

“Agreed,” said the Captain. “Demonstrate your right to the term by waiving your fancy.”

“It is no fancy,” said the Count.

The other shrugged his shoulders.

“I am in earnest, too,” said he.

“Ah!”

The count drew in his breath with a scarce-audible hiss that showed his white teeth. They were more regular than his general conduct, which knew lapse and decay here and there. Had they been false, which they were not, they would yet have but libelled him in a certain degree.

He looked at his companion earnestly a moment, then put his cigarette to his lips and sank back with a sigh into a luxurious *chaise-longue* before the fire. The snow lay raw and sludgy without over the Rue des Capucines, and the flame on the hearth tongued up with a languid undulation that had nothing of the crisp influence of frost about it.

In this it emulated the example of the Count, for though it was languid, it was yet a flame and burned, which was precisely what the Count did at the present moment, though to outward seeming he was a cool and composed aristocrat. Nor could the fire inside him do so much as dry the somewhat unwholesome pallor—a little like that of raw wet veal—from his cheek; for that ugly bloom was his long heritage as a votary of Priapus, in whose religion such as he are wont to be confirmed at a very tender age, though they adopt no saintly agnomen at the laying on of hands. It seemed, however, to have crisped his beard into a profusion of little frizzled curls, which were a classical distinction according to the Phrynes of fashion, and had won him many a heart beating oddly out of its place by reason of tight lacing.

“My friend,” he said, softly, “let us discuss this matter quite dispassionately.”

“It is decided in a word,” said the other; “*les bon comptes font les bons amis.*”

“Benôit, my good Benôit,” said the Count; “it is not becoming in me to allude to any material claim I may have upon your friendship or”—his fingers moved on his cigarette with a little sticky crackle of dampness—“at least your consideration.”

“Believe me,” said the Captain, “I applaud your delicacy, which is ever intuitive.”

His coolness came less from culture than a determined habit of guardedness common to bullies. His companion softly blew out a thin ring of smoke with a second little fluttering sigh.

“Well,” he said, “let us remain to the end men of the world.”

“Precisely,” was the answer; “to the end.”

The Count rose from his chair and stepped daintily to the window. A film of mist lay over the glass, which he rubbed away with his coat sleeve.

“The world is *in articulo mortis*,” he said, with a yawn. “It is a ship desolated by the pirates of the weather, and its scuppers run blood of snow.”

“Bah!” quoth Monsieur le Capitaine, “I hate poetry! There is earth under the snow, and I am of that.”

“It is mud now,” said the Count.

“Granted. There is mud in everything, from love to Pommard.”

The Count wheeled and regarded his friend with a peculiar look.

“Benôit,” he said, “have we come to this, that there is no love unclouded by filth?”

The other shrugged his shoulders.

“Benôit!”—he moved softly to the table—“we must end this for once and all.”

He dropped his lids nervously, and twitched the ash from his cigarette with the rather shaky little finger of the hand that held it.

“Bonôit, I love Mademoiselle Gabrielle.”

“And I, my Count.”

“I love her purely, with the first fair passion of my life.”

The Captain gave a prolonged laugh. It was beneath his breath, nevertheless, and shook him like the rattle of an earthquake under a house. The other set his lips at the sound, and a spot of colour came to his cheek.

"You cannot understand it—you, the *chevalier de la coupe* of a hundred hearts."

"*Morbleu!*" breathed the bully, fiercely, and his strong fingers closed on the decanter-neck at his side. Then he gave a second laugh, and, taking a cigar from his pocket, bit off the end and spat it upon the floor.

"Let us forego compliments," he said, "and discuss this matter, as you say, dispassionately. To begin—"

"To begin and to end; I desire to make Mademoiselle Gabrielle my wife."

"She is an actress."

"What then?"

"She is whole fathoms beneath you in position."

"Position! A murrain on the cant! It is such that smell foul in the nostrils of the Christ—rank that is rank as hellebore. To be born to honours is to have one's bad doom pre-ordained. I am cursed and lost, and a fair white hand droops pityingly to where I writhe in Hell. I see blue sky before me and yellow flowers awake in pleasant fields. I see white doves wheeling round a cote that stands brown beyond the fruit-trees, and I think of my boyhood and pant with tears to reach them all and ease this labouring heart—ah, Benôit!"

The Captain stared a moment, then turned his head to hide the smile and the profound "Bah!" that issued from his lips. Presently he found his voice.

"And if," he said, with gravity, "I, too, feel all this?"

"You!"—he could not conceal his scorn.

The Captain lifted his shoulders.

"And, for Mademoiselle?" he said.

"She is a pure angel, and I give her my black soul to cleanse."

Monsieur le Capitaine very deliberately lit his cigar, smiling at the flaming end the while with an odd expression that might have been due to the sucking-in of his lips. Having coaxed it into a fine glow, he enjoyed a half dozen epicurean puffs, sat himself down in a chair, crossed his knees and his hands over them, and regarded his companion with a curious gaze.

"You interest me," he said, with a smile; "proceed, *mon ami*. These ethics of our trade are points for study."

The pallid aristocrat tossed up his hands with an irresponsible gesture.

"Ass that I am!" he cried, "to sniff for patchouli in a dustbin."

"A thousand thanks!" said the Captain, dryly; but the other without noticing him, had seated himself once more with all trace of emotion gone from his face.

"Now," he said, with great calmness, "we will place this matter, my good friend, on a sensible footing."

"Of a surety; I desire nothing better."

"To commence. I, Felix Marie de la Balzane, long-practised *roué*, profligate, gambler (save the mark!) have had, in the aftermath of my career, the strange fatuity to sink my poor remnants of life in the sparkling deep-water well of a love, honest and true."

"And I, Monsieur Felix?"

"And you—good; you assert the same. Let us then say 'we,' and 'an honest *common* love.' We, cloyed with the sick sweets of passion, cynical of the inevitable too-easy surrender, choking now on the winery dregs of the cup, meet poor simple Gabrielle, Madonna's handmaiden, a lady as virtuous as she is beautiful."

"As virtuous as she is beautiful," echoed the Captain, and blew the ash from his cigar.

"In her," said the Count, "I, latter-day Rousseau, recognise my saving angel. For her I would brave the Dark Valley and the burning hate of Apollion. What matter the sneers of libertines, such as I, or the scorn of the world! High-priest of evil, I, at least, know of the dust that lies in the heart of sardonic hypocrisy and cynicism. Only goodness may endure; only virtue is real throughout. But, enough of words! I, who would stake my life on the purity of her least thought—I must gain her or die. Will you stand aside out of my path and forego your fancy?"

The Captain took his cigar from his mouth, and regarded the firm white ash thereof pleasantly from under his half-closed eyelids.

"The reformed rake," he said, "is ever the most selfish of reptiles that slime the Devil's earth."

"Will you stand aside?"

"So smugly does he plume himself on his novel action. No censor like your conscience-stricken thief; no tyrant like your elated democrat."

"Will you stand aside?"

"And I, my friend? Am I to step back into Hades and clap my scorched hands at your triumphant flight Heavenwards?"

The Count passed his hand once over his forehead, then dropped his arms at his side, and looked his companion steadily in the face.

"I never thought to move you," he said, in a quiet voice. "Must it come to this, that I strike you across the mouth?"

For an instant the other showed his teeth, like a bull-terrier twitched by the ear.

"*Malediction!*" he said with a laugh; "you are ingenious, my friend. But be fair in your new-found morality, or of its nature you damage it. Why should I step aside rather than you?"

"I love."

"And I, pray?"

"But yet another fancy, my worthy Benôit."

"Ah! So the *gamin* argues who covets his comrade's mud pie."

"Then only force shall conquer."

"Precisely. But stay your hand, Monsieur! I meet you with a compromise."

"There can be none."

"But listen ! It is Mademoiselle Gabrielle or death ?"

"So." The other nodded.

"Then we stand on common ground."

He leapt from his chair, and stepping to an *escritoire*, brought thence a pack of cards.

"Cut !" he cried boisterously ; "a *duel d'honneur*. Let he who loses shoot himself !"

The Count stepped back. He had gone a thought paler, and his lips trembled a little. Then he stepped gently to the table and seated himself.

"I agree," he said ; "Gabrielle or death."

"A moment !" said his companion. "Observe, I write on this sheet of note-paper that the sick *ennui* of life has driven me to the deed, and I mark the hour by the clock. I sign my name. Do you the same with another also. The survivor must be permitted leisure to escape and be seen of others ere the accomplishment of the deed."

"I agree," said the Count. "Death or Gabrielle."

* * * * *

Half-an-hour later Monsieur le Capitaine stepped hastily from the door of the house in the Rue des Capucines. A friend passed him at the moment, whose nodded greeting he returned with marked cheeriness. But he had not walked a dozen yards down the sludgy street when a sharp muffled detonation broke upon his ear. He stopped and looked stealthily round.

"Too quick !" he muttered. "That was inconsiderate ; but the fellow was never a gentleman."

The acquaintance he had but now greeted had heard the sound also, and together with a passer-by or so was staring up at the window from behind which the report had seemed to come.

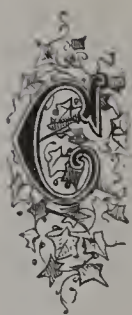
"Good !" murmured the Captain, seeing himself unobserved, and he continued his way.

Turning presently into a side street, he drew a *porte-monnaie* from his breast-pocket, and from it selected a certain *billet* about which hung a faint fragrance of white rose.

He read, with a smile upon his face, the superscription addressed to himself, "*de votre petite bonne amie, Gabrielle,*" and thrust the letter thoughtfully back into his pocket.

"The fool !" he said. "And with his experience to suffer himself to be thus hoodwinked."

Your Call, Sir!!




OLD ! Oh so cold ! the hand that once we held,
Cold are the lips that never more shall smile ;
The blast of Death another tree has felled
That blossomed on the earth so short a while.
The tree is dead—almost before its leaves
Fulfilled the promise of its early May—
The silent earth its own poor dust receives
Ere yet the morning brightened into day.
Still is the heart that never more shall beat,
The kindly words of cheer for ever dumb ;
The reaper came, and found the ripened wheat
Fit for the garnering, and bore it Home.
Home, for the dreary blackness of the night
Has yielded to the Dawn of perfect peace ;
The sleeper wakes from darkness into light
In that far Home where toils and troublings cease.
Thou canst not vanish from us, for a chain
Of sweetest memories doth bind thee still ;
For must we not recall thee yet again
When others strive thy vacant place to fill ?
Yes ! thou art happy in thy latest part,
In the great play whose run shall never close ;
No prompter needed, as, with throbbing heart,
Thou mad'st thine entrance when the curtain rose ;
We did not hear the echoing of the cheers
That rang in exultation thro' the skies :
That entrance made, all banished were the tears,
The weary toilings, and the hopeless sighs.
Our call will come—God grant that then, like thee,
We cast away the dregs of life's cold cup ;
Knowing our words, tho' unrehearsed they be,
And greet with hopefulness, the " ringing up."

HENRY V. ESMOND.

December 15th, 1889.

Early English Actresses.

BY S. J. ADAIR FITZ-GERALD.



THE most reliable dramatic authorities incline to the belief that the first woman actor was introduced to the English stage by Sir William Davenant who, defying the ordinance of the Puritans under the Commonwealth, gave an entertainment at Rutland House, Charterhouse Yard, in 1656. It was on the 21st of May, and he produced in operatic form the first part of his own play, "The Siege of Rhodes," and assigned to Mrs. Coleman the part of Ianthe. We have no record as to the manner in which this attempt was received; Malone in his account of the English stage briefly says: "In 1659 or 1660, in imitation of foreign theatres, women were first introduced on the scene. In 1656, indeed, Mrs. Coleman, wife to Mr. Edward Coleman, represented Ianthe in the first part of 'The Siege of Rhodes;' but the little she had to say was spoken in recitative." Many years later this same Mrs. Coleman sang at 'Diary' Pepy's house, as may be gathered from this extract:—"31st October, 1665. About nine at night I come home, and anon comes Mrs. Coleman and her husband, and she sung very finely, though her voice is decayed as to strength, but mighty sweet though soft, and a pleasant jolly woman, and mighty good humour. She sung part of the Opera, though she would not own she did get any of it without book in order to the stage." It is presumed that this Edward Coleman was, if not an actor, at any rate largely connected with the play-houses of the period, though it is certainly odd, not to say aggravating, that we have no particulars as to what he actually had to do at the theatres, and it is very strange that we have no proof of Mrs. Coleman's ever appearing after the Restoration, for it was after the Restoration in the spring of 1662, to be accurate, that Sir William Davenant opened his new theatre called "The Duke's Play-house," in Portugal Row, Lincoln's Inn Fields, with "The Siege of Rhodes" in its entirety as a grand heroic drama, with the following cast: Mr. Betterton acted Solymán the Magnificent; Mr. Harris, Alfonso; Mr. Lilliston, Villerius (the Grand Master); Mr. Blagden, the Admiral; Mrs. Davenport, Roxalana; and Mrs. Sanderson, Ianthe, which latter lady, says Malone, "is reported to have been the first woman that appeared on an English stage"—meaning the regular professional stage, of course. Then Mrs. Sanderson (who afterwards became Mrs. Betterton) must have acted in a theatre prior to this, or Mrs. Daven-

port might lay equal claim to the honour. That invaluable old gossip, Pepys, observes, under date January 3rd, 1661: "To the theatre, where was acted "*Beggar's Bush*," it being very well done; and here *the first time that I ever saw women come upon the stage*." And yet he expresses no surprise, but takes it as a matter of course, and calmly ignores reference to actresses again until 1663, when he tells us that he went to see "*The Indian Queen*," which he describes as a good play, "but spoiled with ryme." "*The Indian Queen*" was a tragedy in heroic verse, written by Sir Robert Howard and Dryden; it appears to have been a great success, and had a run of several nights. Speaking of the acting, our Diarist says: "But above my expectation most, the eldest Marshall did do and act her part most excellently well as I ever heard woman in my life; but her voice is not so sweet as Ianthe's." The eldest Marshall was Anne Marshall, a celebrated actress, and her youngest sister Becke was also acknowledged to be very talented. Pepys knew the sisters personally, and frequently mentions Becke with much delight and consideration. They were daughters of a Presbyterian minister. The Ianthe to whom he alludes as above was undoubtedly Mrs. Mary Saunderson, or Sanderson, who made a great impression on the town. She played all Shakespeare's heroines, and created "the majority of the leading parts in the drama of the day."

Although we do not dispute that Sir William Davenant, who did so much towards improving and advancing the stage and its accessories, was the first to establish women as performers, many women had appeared on the boards long before he became manager of the Duke's. There is indisputable evidence that a woman played Desdemona in "*Othello*" at the Red Bull Theatre, in St. John Street, Clerkenwell, prior to 1660. And Prynne in his "*Histriomastix*, or Scourge for Stage Players," published in 1633, speaks of a company of French women actors at the play-house in Blackfriars as—well not highly decorous or moral persons. Indeed, he called them such objectionable names that his obnoxious language was made one of the indictments in the prosecution that was brought against him when he was sentenced to be imprisoned for life. And it has been surmised that there must have been English actresses on the stage at the same time. He did not suffer the full penalty, however, but lived to sit in the pillory in Cheapside while his voluminous works were burnt under his very nose and almost suffocated him. How much better it would have been for Prynne and posterity if he had written a full account of these feminine Thespians instead of maligning them! But to return to the Desdemona. Her name is not handed down to us, though some writers state it was most likely Peggy Hughes; but the prologue to introduce the first woman that came to act on the stage in the tragedy called "*The Moor of Venice*," written by Thomas Jordon, is. Jordon was a minor poet who flourished in the reign of Charles I., and lived to see the restoration of Royalty and the drama. In his prologue he says:

“ ’Tis possible a virtuous woman may
Abhor all sorts of looseness and yet play ”

upon the stage. And then, further on, referring to the gross absurdity of employing men to act the parts of girls and young women, as was then the custom, he continues :

“ Our women are defective and so sized,
You’d think they were some of the Guard disguised,
For, to speak truth, men act, that are between
Forty and fifty, wenches of fifteen ;
With bone so large and nerve so in compliant,
When you call Desdemona—enter Giant ! ”

This unknown actress, unless it were Mrs. Sanderson, or perhaps Peggy Hughes—which decidedly is not an improbable suggestion—must therefore be considered the forerunner of all the succeeding legitimate women actors, and it is astonishing that the people tolerated men and boys so long as they did. It is only just, however, to say that many actors achieved considerable celebrity as impersonators of female characters, and among those who were remarkable for their apparent effeminacy may be included Stephen Hamerton, who is said to have been a “most noted and beautiful woman actor,” and who played at Blackfriars in the age immediately succeeding Shakespeare. Two men, Hart and Clun, bred to the stage, also made their mark in female rôles, and Alexander Goffe, the “Jackal” of the poor players during the suppression, was likewise a woman actor. Goffe used to scout for Robert Cox, who kept the drama alive by giving illegal performances in any house or hall he could obtain. Naturally many eccentric tales are told about these representatives of the gentler sex, and one ludicrous anecdote is worth re-telling. On one occasion when Charles II. visited the theatre, the performance not commencing at the usual time, the merry monarch sent to know the reason of the delay, when the manager came forward and begged the indulgence of His Majesty for a few minutes as the Queen was not yet shaved, which mightily diverted the King, who laughed heartily. The introduction of women as a recognised institution may be truly ascribed more to accident than premeditation, or the demands of the public, for it was chiefly owing to the fact that the boys who had been trained to act female characters before the rebellion, had, during the suspension of the theatres, grown too masculine to resume their delicate office, or as a rhymer put it :

“ Doubting we should never play a-gen,
We have played all our *women* into *men*.”

And so women, to the advantage of the play and the people, were brought forward ; but even after they had secured a firm footing, all sorts of apologies were offered for the “ indecorum ” of this novel innovation. However, the novelty soon became so palatable that actresses became very fascinating and lucrative attractions at the two theatres—Drury Lane and Lincoln’s Inn Fields ; and in 1663 a

comedy by Killigrew, called "The Parson's Wedding," was acted entirely by women, although there were seven male parts, exclusive of servants. Pepys thought the play loose, and did not approve of the women in men's attire. Not long after this Hart, the grand-nephew of Shakespeare, fell in love with the pretty orange girl who used to attend nightly at Drury Lane Theatre to sell her wares. He coached her and introduced her to the stage, and she became famous as Nell Gwynne, the idol of the town, and the mistress of the impressionable king. Nell excelled all performers in comic parts, and of course captivated that gay rogue Pepys, who calls her a jade and "a bold merry slut," and whom he was not above saluting behind the scenes at the conclusion of "The Humorous Lieutenant." Besides the actresses already mentioned, there were Mrs. Knipp (called Bab Allen), and Mrs. Corey, who was sent to prison for imitating Lady Harvey on the stage. Then came Peg Woffington, the second most celebrated actress, who died in 1761, and thenceforward woman actors became the fashion, to the great advantage and adornment of the stage, and have remained so ever since.



Our Play-Box.

"ACROSS HER PATH."

New play in four acts, written by Miss ANNIE IRISH. Founded on Miss Annie S. Swan's novel.

First produced at Terry's Theatre, Tuesday afternoon, Jan. 21, 1890.

Sir Adrian Severne	Mr. OSCAR ADYE.	Frauees Severne	.. Miss T. ROMA.
Jasper Leigh	Mr. HENRY PAGDEN.	Lady Bassett	Miss LE THIÈRE.
Markham	Mr. G. ARLISS.	Elspeth Carmichael	Mrs. E. H. BROOKE.
Johnson	Mr. G. BELMORE.	Barbara Dale	Miss ANNIE IRISH.
Lady Severne	Miss JOSEPHINE ST. ANGE.		

Some years ago Henry Kingsley wrote a novel entitled "Austin Elliott." It is a work that anyone may read with pleasure and profit, and a considerable portion of the interest turns on the concealment from her lover by the heroine that she has a brother who is a convict. But then the convict himself is brought before us—he is a weak-minded creature, who from his boyhood has no real understanding of right and wrong—and the sister enlists our sympathy, for she is good and pure and unselfish, and allows her lover to estrange himself, because she fears to blight his prospects in life should it come to the knowledge of the world that he has a felon for a brother-in-law. She suffers for the sake of the man she loves. Now in Miss Irish's play "Across Her Path," Barbara Dale is a young woman who, having a convict brother, marries a man devotedly attached to her, she not caring one iota for him, merely that his name and position may shield her should the unfortunate little family occurrence crop up. Later, when love has come after marriage, and she has learnt to love the man who worships her and who would in a moment forgive her concealment of the objectionable relative, Barbara takes an evening walk in the garden with a rejected suitor, who knows all about her brother and has spitefully resolved that her husband shall know as much as he does. Further, he leads the poor husband to believe that Barbara was not all that she should have been in past days, and Barbara still keeps the secret about this wretched brother, the divulgence of which would explain everything; and goes off in a cab at a moment's notice with an old servant, leaving husband, home, and all, to resume her career as a successful novel writer. There is no occasion to say much about the former lover's repentance when he is in the last stages of consumption, and of the missing Barbara's whereabouts being discovered through the style of another novel she has written! What we have to look at, is that all sympathy with the heroine is destroyed by her selfishness and folly. Her guarding her secret is only to preserve *her own* comfort, and her running away and hiding is simply inexplicable. Miss Annie Irish's dialogue was so good, and her drawing of one or two of the characters (in particular Lady Bassett and Elspeth Carmichael, both played to perfection by Miss Le Thiere and Mrs. E. H. Brooke), was so clever and original, that all those who saw the piece could only regret that the authoress had wasted good labour on a silly plot. Miss Irish must guard against becoming almost pedantic in her delivery, otherwise her acting was sincere and intelligent. Mr. Henry Pagden was fairly good as Jasper Leigh, the vindictive lover, and Miss T. Roma imparted just the right

amount of *hauteur* to the most objectionably proud Frances Severne. Mr. Oscar Adye did not shine as Sir Adrian Severne.

THE TAMING OF THE SHREW.

A Comedy by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

As presented by F. R. Benson's Shakespearian Company, at the Globe Theatre, on Thursday, Jan. 23, 1890.

Baptista	Mr. G. F. BLACK.	Nicholas	Mr. C. M. HALLARD.
Vincentio	Mr. H. ATHOL FORDE.	Adam	Mr. L. ROSOMAN.
Lucentio	Mr. OTHO STUART.	Ralph	Mr. G. HIPPISELEY.
Gremio	Mr. STEPHEN PHILLIPS.	Gregory	Mr. A. E. GEORGE.
Hortensio	Mr. GERALD GURNEY.	Gabriel	Mr. J. B. CROFT.
Tranio	Mr. HERBERT ROSS.	Phillip	Mr. HUGH MEADOWS.
Blondello	Mr. WALTER SHAW.	Peter	Mr. E. MAJOR.
Petruchio	Mr. F. R. BENSON.	Walter	Mr. EDGAR STEVENS.
Grumio	Mr. G. R. WEIR.	Servant to Baptista ..	Mr. ALFRED BRYDONE.
A Pedant	Mr. G. M. HOWARD.	Katherina	Mrs. F. R. BENSON.
Tailor	Mr. A. GRENVILLE.	Bianca	Miss MARION GREY.
Sugarbop	Mr. H. GORDON TOMKINS.	Widow	Miss HAWKINS.
Nathaniel	Mr. CHAS. BARWELL.	Curtis	Miss ALICE DENVIL.

Mr. Benson was fortunate in having such a good-natured audience as was present on the first representation of the "Taming of the Shrew," but even their patience was exhausted at last, when the young manager clowned to such an extent as to produce the effect of a pantomime rally. Mr. Benson has quite mistaken the character of Petruchio. Shakespeare intended him to be a gentleman, merry and light-hearted, but, at the same time, firm of purpose and so strong-minded as to be able to cope with and overcome the domineering, spoilt Katherina. The lady, too, should be womanly, not the cross-grained vixen that Mrs. Benson made of her. Of the whole cast, only Mr. Walter Shaw, Mr. Stephen Phillips, and to a small extent Mr. G. R. Weir, deserve favourable mention; the rest were amateurish in the extreme. The mounting of the piece was everything that could be desired, but this will not compensate for poor acting, nor disarm criticism. It will be noticed that Christopher Sly was omitted, probably with advantage.

"DR. BILL."

Farcical Comedy in Three Acts, adapted from the French of Albert Carré by HAMILTON AIDÉ.

First produced at the Avenue Theatre, Saturday, February 1, 1890.

Dr. William Brown	Mr. FREDERICK TERRY.	Louisa Brown	Miss E. ROBINS.
Mr. Firman	Mr. ALBERT CHEVALIER	Jenny Firman	Miss LAURA GRAVES.
Mr. Horton	Mr. GEORGE CAPEL.	Mrs. Firman	Miss CARLOTTA LECLERCQ.
George Webster ..	Mr. BENJAMIN WEBSTER.	Ellen	Miss MARIE LINDEN.
Baggs	Mr. HARRY GRATTAN.	Miss Fauntleroy ..	Miss EDITH KENWARD.
Mrs. Horton	Miss FANNY BROUGH.		

Seldom, if ever, has a risky French play been better adapted than "Dr. Bill." Mr. Aidé has contrived to retain all the fun of "Dr. Jo-Jo," and yet make it wholesome. Dr. William Brown at the age of thirty-five has married and settled down, and having a competency declines to practice. He has good reasons; in the past he has been known as Dr. Bill, the favourite medico of ballerinas, burlesque actresses, and ladies of that type, and been a *persona grata* at *petits soupers*, dramatic balls, etc. So he does not wish to meet again his old acquaintances, but fate is too strong for him; his father-in-law Firman looks upon idleness as the root of all evil, and so he has a brass plate stuck on his son-in-law's door, sends out circulars, writes to the Pall-Mall, that Dr. Brown was the unknown medical gentleman who rendered such assistance to a lady who met with an accident in Hyde Park, and does his best to bring the doctor into notoriety. And he succeeds, for the first patient is Miss Fauntleroy, a lively lady who, recalling the escapades of Doctor Bill, induces him to take part in his own drawing-room in an eccentric "Kangaroo

Dance." Then Mrs. Horton, an opposite neighbour (married to a jealous Inspector of Police), imbued with a spirit of mischief, induces Louisa Brown to allow her husband the doctor to be sent for to attend Mrs. Horton, who is persuaded he will, "like all the men," flirt with her. She does not know Doctor Brown, and so when George Webster, sent with a message from the doctor, announces himself as the medical man, being already smitten with the lady, he, in lieu of feeling her pulse, squeezes her hand, etc., and being ordered to give a prescription, is discovered by the handwriting to be the sender of a handsome bouquet. From this arise all sorts of misconceptions; Mrs. Brown is sent for to find her husband, as she supposes *in flagrante delicto*, and being shut up in a dark room with Webster, sounlly boxes his ears. The real Dr. Brown arrives and is pushed into another dark room with his mother-in-law. Papa-in-law Firman is taken by the jealous Horton for the disturber of his domestic peace, and in the third act Dr. Brown is likely to be charged, not only with having written the prescription containing ingredients enough to poison a whole family, but also with being the man who picked the pocket of the lady who met with the accident, the man who pretended to assist her having done so. Not for an instant does the fun of the piece flag; the last act was infinitely better than might have been expected after such an excellent one as the second, and has been specially worked up since the first night. Miss Fanny Brough was inimitable in her mock heroics of despair, when she discovered that she had accused the wrong man, and carried the comedy along on the top of the waves. Mr. Terry was scarcely light enough in his touch, but then the character is out of his line. Mr. Chevalier a little over elaborated his part, but was decidedly droll. Mr. Benjamin Webster was very funny as an empty-headed young fop, who is always running after the ladies, and Mr. Capel clever as the victim of the green-eyed monster. Miss Robins was very natural and attractive as the loving Louisa Brown, and Miss Marie Linden did much in the small part of a spying waiting-maid. Mr. Alexander's season of managership commenced most favourably, for the applause and laughter were unstinted throughout the evening; the entire company had to appear after each act, and the adapter received an ovation at the close of the evening. "Dr. Bill" was preceded by

"FOOL'S MATE."

New and original comedy in one act, by FREDERICK BROUGHTON.

First placed in the evening bill at the Avenue, Feb. 1, 1890.

The Earl of Somerdale	Mr. FREDERICK TERRY.	|	Mary Egerton	Miss MARY KINGSLEY.
Arthur Egerton.. ..	Mr. NUTCOMBE GOULD.	|	Dorothy	Miss GRACIE MURIELLE.

Like all Mr. Broughton's work this proved to be neatly written, and indeed contained more strength than is usual in comedietta. Dorothy is a precocious child, that having learned something of the meaning of the word strategy and the mystery of Fool's Mate from her father Arthur Egerton, turns the knowledge to considerable account by picking the pocket of the Earl of Somerdale of a letter which compromises her father politically, and causing his Lordship innocently to burn the document. The compromising paper is intended to be used by the Earl to force Mary Egerton to accept him as a husband. A little cutting in the opening of the play is very advisable, as it would probably ensure even a heartier reception than was accorded it on the opening night. Miss Mary Kingsley was womanly and dignified, Mr. Nutcombe Gould firm, and Mr. Frederick

Terry very good. Miss Gracie Murielle, as the very unreal Dorothy, had learnt her lesson well, but there was a want of nature and spontaneity. I should like to call attention to the excellence of the "sets" in this piece and in "Dr. Bill." The scenery is extraordinarily vividly painted by Mr. J. Harker, and so well arranged as to give the idea of a much larger stage than the Avenue really possesses. The new act drop is handsome, but from its character rather dwarfs the house.

"NEW LAMPS FOR OLD."

A (comparatively speaking) new and original Play in three Acts by JEROME K. JEROME.

First produced at Terry's Theatre, Saturday, February 8, 1890.

Edwin Honeydew ..	Mr. BERNARD GOULD,	Jorkins	Mr. W. LESTOCQ.
Elvira Honeydew ..	Miss CISSY GRAHAME.	Jemima	Miss HOUSTON.
Postlethwaite	Mr. F. KERR.	Buster	Mr. W. S. PENLEY.
Octavia	{ Miss GERTRUDE		
	{ KINGSTON.		

"New Lamps for Old"! Were we disposed to moralise, it might come home to us that, persuaded by the deceptive blandishment of the cajoling magician, we often exchange the shabby looking but useful old lamp for the garish dazzle of the bright but imperfect new one, and throw away the substance of contentment for the shadow of unrest and novelty. A lesson may be learnt even in such a skit as Mr. Jerome has given us, in which he satirizes the doctrines of Mrs. Mona Caird, the would-be teachings of Ibsen and the absurdities of the yearning for one's "affinity." This is all treated in a thoroughly burlesque spirit, though carried to a farcical degree, and though a thinness of motive is only too apparent, there is considerable cynical humour shown, and the dialogue is piquant, clever, and amusing. The absolute weakness of the plot consists in there being no possible reason for Mr. and Mrs. Honeydew contemplating elopement, for they are really fond of each other, and the only excuse they can put forward is that their minds have been perturbed, through the doubts engendered by reading "Is Marriage a Failure?" And so Honeydew listens to the strong-minded principles inculcated by Octavia, a married woman, and Elvira is won over by the poetic Postlethwaite, a long-haired individual who rhapsodizes on the charms of the unattainable, and the two pairs elope in the morning to arrive, strange to say, at the same hotel, the "Sweetbriar Arms," Swandale-on-Thames. During the few hours that elapse prior to dinner, they become very much disgusted and bored with their "affinities," and long to return to mutual domestic bliss, for Octavia is none other than the wife of Postlethwaite, whom she has married and separated from as per agreement that a month's notice on either side should dissolve the contract. Buster, family solicitor to the Honeydews, is anxious to figure professionally in a divorce case, and scenting mischief in the wind, follows the couple down to their riverside retreat, where from his persistent search for evidence he is taken by Jemima, the waitress, for a Mormon, and the husband of both the ladies. Anxious to hide himself, he takes refuge in what he thinks is a cupboard, but it proves to be a dinner lift, which being out of order in some way, persistently carries him up and down, and reveals him to the audience at intervals noting down scraps of conversation he overhears, eating scraps of food he finds in his hiding-place, and occasionally uttering smothered scraps of profane language as he is whisked up or down. The failure of the electric light prevents the complete recognition by each other of the various characters, and an amusing third act is

provided by their all returning in a more or less bedraggled and miserable condition from their night journey, which they have accomplished in all sorts of queer conveyances, Swandale being miles from a station. The wretched little Buster is taxed with being a Lothario and cause of all the trouble, etc., and goes off, protesting that he will have no "case" after all; the poet and his strong-minded Octavia agree to re-unite their fortunes, and the curtain falls on Honeydew and his wife locked in the fondest of embraces. Mr. Penley, wonderfully made up as a little high-dried lawyer, created much laughter, but has not as strong a part as is usually supplied for him. Mr. Bernard Gould was amusing and natural as Honeydew. Miss Cissy Grahame was thoroughly artistic as the romantic silly Mrs. Honeydew. Mr. F. Kerr gave an excellent character sketch of the "great Postlethwaite." Miss Gertrude Kingston was a little too *prononcée* as Octavia. Mr. W. Lestocq was very droll as the smug complacent butler Jorkins, who, accepting "tips" from master and mistress to conceal their doings from each other, pockets his *douceurs* and laughs at both. The piece was very well received, the author was called, and Miss Cissy Grahame appears to have commenced her management successfully; but time will show whether "New Lamps for Old" is not rather over the heads of some audiences. The set representing "Grundy Lodge, Putney," is one of the most elegant and tasteful Louis XVI. productions that has been seen for some time. The draperies, marquetric tables, and cabinets are exquisite. "The Parting of the Ways," played on the same evening as a first piece, is by Frederick Bowyer and Mr. Edwardes Sprange, and is not in the happiest vein. Harold Conybeare (Mr. Yorke Stephens) has been abroad some twenty years, during which time Margaret Grey (Miss M. A. Giffard), his betrothed, has been true to him, and on his return he renews his vows, yet at the same time he falls in love and asks for the affection of Edith Hastings (Miss Helen Leyton), a niece of Margaret's, who is the image of what her aunt was when Harold left England. Margaret overhears the confession, and sorrowfully yields up her lover to her younger rival. There was nothing very noticeable either in the writing or the acting.

"CLARISSA."

New drama, in four Acts, by ROBERT BUCHANAN, founded on Richardson's world-famous novel. First produced at the Vaudeville Theatre, Thursday afternoon, Feb. 6, 1890, and placed in the evening bill, Saturday, Feb. 8th, 1890.

Mr. Harlowe	Mr. HARBURY.	Drawer	Mr. AUSTIN.
Captain Harlowe	Mr. OSWALD YORKE.	Philip Belford	Mr. THOMAS THORNE.
Mr. Solmes	Mr. CYRIL MAUDE.	Clarissa Harlowe	Miss WINIFRED EMERY.
Stokes	Mr. J. S. BLYTHE.	Hetty Belford	Miss ELLA BANISTER.
Lovelace	Mr. T. B. THALBERG.	Jenny	Miss MARY COLLETTE.
Capt. Maeshane	Mr. FRED THORNE.	Mrs. Osborne	Miss C. OWEN.
Sir Harry Tourville ..	Mr. F. GROVE.	Lady Bab Lawrence ..	Miss L. BRYER.
Aubrey	Mr. FRANK GILLMORE.	Lady May Lawrence ..	{ Miss FLORENCE
Watchman	Mr. WHEATMAN.	Sally	{ WEMYSS.
Richards	Mr. C. RAMSEY.		Miss LILY HANBURY.
Coffee-stall-keeper ..	Mr. BRAY.		

Mr. Buchanan's version of "Clarissa Harlowe" is not the first by several that have been produced. He admits that he is much indebted to the French dramatisation by M.M. Dumanoir, Guillard, and Clairville, played "at the Gymnase in 1842." Since then it was seen at the Princess's in 1846, the adaptors being Messrs. T. H. Lacy and John Courtney, when Charles Matthews (an actor who we all know had not the faintest idea of sentiment or romance) was the Lovelace

and Mrs. Stirling, Clarissa. Then there was Mr. Boucicault's version, and latest Mr. W. G. Wills's, produced at the Theatre Royal, Birmingham, December 16, 1889. Mr. Buchanan has given us a workmanlike and most interesting play; his language is appropriate, and the introduction of Hetty Belford adds to the strength of the drama. There are blemishes, however. There is something that is almost too horrible in the first act where Lovelace toys with one of his victims (Jenny), and holds out as a reward to her that if she will aid him in his designs, he will get her the situation of waiting maid with Clarissa so that Jenny shall be near him. Again, that men of position like Sir Harry Tourville and Aubrey should pander so openly to Lovelace's brutal instincts is brought too much in evidence, as is the scene where these men and a couple of infamous women drink success to their patron's designs on the hapless heroine. Nor does it seem in accordance with the repentance of Belford (the Morden of the novel) that he should immediately after his promise to lead a new life slay Lovelace, who then dies at Clarissa's feet, she having in a state of ecstatic delirium kissed and forgiven her betrayer as her soul departs. In the last act, too, there is an almost brutal disregard for the feelings of the repentant Hetty, whom by his past conduct he has actually driven to the streets, when in her very presence Lovelace offers marriage to Clarissa as some, though tardy, atonement for the evil he has wrought. Another blemish is the frequency with which the name of the Deity is invoked. Mr. Buchanan has given us an exquisite character in Clarissa, the soul of purity, defiled only in an earthly sense, but a sublime and spotless martyr in Heaven's sight, and it is for this reason that I should have esteemed his work the more highly had he not so conspicuously brought out the sensuality and animal nature of some of his characters. Though in the first act I thought Miss Winifred Emery a little cold, scarce showing sufficiently the possession that Lovelace had taken of her heart, later she was near perfection; her death scene, though prolonged, was robbed of any sense of weariness to the beholder by its exquisite poetry and beauty. The actress appeared to be almost transfigured, and to be already a denizen of that happier world in which she was so soon to take her place for ever. Mr. Thalberg, though very good for so young an actor, was neither romantic nor passionate. Such a character as Lovelace, a man who can obtain such conquest over women of every grade, should be thoroughly captivating towards them; when he tires of his playthings of an hour he might be heartless but he should not be cynical. Miss Banister surprised me by her power as Hetty. Her elocution was very faulty and her bursts of emotion were undisciplined, but there was distinct evidence of a capability, that study and experience will develop into the accomplishment of great things. Mr. Thomas Thorne was earnest and sincere as Belford, a man who has lost faith in woman since his sister's disgrace, but whose heart is moved at the innocence of Clarissa. His scene with Lovelace when taxing him with his treachery, and his endeavour to rescue the profligate's fresh victim, was intense and vivid. Mr. Cyril Maude was excellent as Solmes, the old lover, intended by her father for Clarissa's husband. Mr. Fred Thorne, Miss Mary Collette, and Miss Lily Hanbury also deserve very favourable mention. Mr. Hemsley has in the second act given us a capital reproduction of Covent Garden Market as it appeared in 1749, and the dresses by Nathan & Co., from designs by Karl, are handsome and correct. "Clarissa" was so well received that it was placed in the evening bill almost immediately.

CECIL HOWARD.





GROUP FROM "THE MIDDLEMAN."

MR. E. S. WILLARD, MISS ANNIE HUGHES, AND MR. E. W. GARDEN.

"Look Nancy! Look Jesse! I've done it! I've done it!
I've found out the secret."

THE MIDDLEMAN, Act III.

Our Musical-Boy.

The death of Charles Mackay recalls memories of "Cheer, Boys, Cheer" and the songs of long ago. I am not an admirer of all the old songs by any means, being of the opinion that some of them might by now be relegated to that corner of the "limbo of dead mags" specially set apart for them; and I also feel certain that "Cheer, Boys, Cheer" is not frequently heard in the modern drawing-room. But there is one question raised by the thought of the old songs with which this fact has little to do. It is, are we improving as song writers? The general consensus of opinion will doubtless decry such an interrogation as an insult; but I should like to ask one question which evolves itself out of the first. Are there any of our present-day songs likely to be even so familiar as "Cheer, Boys, Cheer" is now in, say, forty years' time? If I were called upon to answer the question, I should be inclined to say, no; and the reason, in one word, is "feverish reproduction" on the part of the publisher. We are swamped, flooded, inundated with songs, seven out of every ten of which are trash, and of the others two are palpable imitations of recent successes, and the tenth a passably original effusion. It is the palpable imitations with which I am going to deal just now, as they are the especial "feverish reproduction" germs with which some publishers are only too ready to inoculate the public. I will take, without apologising for the egotism, a successful song, "In Old Madrid." In this song, which I do not mean to seriously criticise, there was a happy idea and a new one. True, it was preceded by "Esmeralda," but the two songs have not an atom of resemblance. The public 'caught on' to "In Old Madrid" at once. What is the result? Nearly every publisher in London brings out a Spanish song, a bolero, an Andalusienne, a gipsy song, *cum multis aliis*. I can count a dozen of these, all alike, and all killing one another. It is not plagiarism, it is flagrant imitation; and it is to be deplored, because never does an imitatory song succeed. Does anyone ever sing now one of the million imitations of "Darby and Joan"; or any of the modern versions of "Come into the Garden, Maud"? Of course it is true one can console oneself with Alfred de Musset and remember "*c'est imiter quelqu'un que de planter des choux*;" but there are cabbages and cabbages, and because Smith likes to grow early Springs, on account of Brown's success with them, is a matter for his own conscience and his gardener, since the outside public who look over the wall at them to see how they get on are not particularly interested. But in songs they are interested; and perhaps would be more so if they knew that good songs are shelved because certain composers and publishers have no scruple in "imitating" any successful song a dozen times over.

One hardly knows whether to congratulate or commiserate with the Carl Rosa Company on Miss Agnes Huntington's secession, or whatever it is, from the Prince of Wales' Theatre. There are, of

course, two versions of the affair—hers and theirs. Rumour speaks of ructions between Augustus Harris and the erstwhile Paul Jones. Can this be? Those who know the genial courtesy of the former, and the gracious amiability of the latter, will scarcely be able to believe it. However, *nous verrons*—when the case gets out of the Scylla of rumour into the Charybdis of the Law Courts.

I have seen “Marjorie” with both “Wilfrids,” Mr. Joseph Tapley and Miss Huntington, and I have no hesitation in saying I prefer it with the tenor as exponent of the part. Though your lady hero be as graceful as she may, the sight of two women making love on the stage must savour of pantomime, and wear an air of unreality that it is difficult to lose sight of. Mr. Slaughter’s music pleased me more the second time than the first. It is graceful and flowing, and certainly melodious, though it would do as well for a nineteenth as for a thirteenth century story. This is, however, a mere detail. Perhaps there is somewhat a preponderance of *tempo di valse*, which is another detail; but it has one or two airs that take the ear captive, if they do not hold it very long. The tenor solo “Dear Little Maid,” perfectly rendered by Mr. Joseph Tapley; a duet for Wilfrid and Marjorie, that at first sadly wanted the tenor voice; a quartette “You’re free,” not appreciated as it might be—these in the first act. In the second, a quaint duet “Pit-a-pat;” another duet for Cicely and the Earl, with a memory of “Dorothy” in it, and an ordinary ballad for soprano, made acceptable by Miss D’Arville’s admirable singing. In the third act, the opening chorus is good; but why take the minuet solo so fast, Mr. Stanislaus? It is one of the prettiest bits in the opera. Mr. Hayden Coffin’s interpolated song with refrain ought to have had a march refrain, not yet another waltz. In fact, the music is curiously like waltz music, even where it is written in other *tempos*. I should be inclined to say that Mr. Slaughter can write better music, and will, one of these days. If not very great or very learned, at least “Marjorie” is pleasant to listen to, and præeminently graceful throughout.

Much has been said of late about the narrowing of the border-land between the music hall and the theatre, but little as regards that which divides the former from the concert stage. That those who go to music halls like to hear an occasional song that is neither vulgar or inane, is a growing fact. While Miss Amy Roselle recites at the Empire, Miss Lucy Clarke, R.A.M., sings such ballads as “The Children’s Home” and “Needles and Pins” at the Pavilion, and is well received. Let us hope this is but one step in a right direction, and that a little common sense and patience will do what the sweeping puritanism of some people certainly will fail to bring about.

Madame Sara Palma, erstwhile “Prima Donna” at the Avenue—in two senses—gave a concert on the 31st of January, at Prince’s Hall. The lady is the possessor of a cultivated voice, though lacking in power, perhaps, in the upper notes, and more suited to the concert-room than the stage. She was well received. A new Spanish tenor, Senor Guetary, made his *débüt*, and met with considerable success, though his voice is somewhat harsh.

The veteran Joachim appeared for the first time this season at the Monday Popular on the 17th. CLIFTON BINGHAM.

NEW MUSIC RECEIVED.

"I Live to Love Thee." (Clifton Bingham and Alfred Moul). A most musicianly song for tenor; not likely to meet with such appreciation as it deserves. (Enoch & Son).—"The Colours of Old." Mr. Louis Diehl has written here a stirring song, not too original, but for that perhaps the more likely to become popular. (E. Nichol).—"A Daughter of Eve." (F. Weatherly and E. Cutler.) Quaint verses, spoilt for want of point just where it should be—the end. Music simple and appropriate. (Chappell & Co.).—"Amore." Waltz. (Gertrude Glyn.) Amateurish, but not written without cleverness. Many composers think it the easiest thing in the world to write a waltz; whereas it is not. Try again, Miss Glyn. (Walter Bros.).—"May Margaret." Choral ballad for S. A. T. B. (Erskine Allon). This does not strike us as more than a moderate work, though in places it is melodious, and it is to some extent scholarly throughout. It is a setting of John Payne's poem. (London Music Publishing Co.).—"Red Riding Hood." A children's opera. (R. Andrè and Isidore de Solla.) Little singers want melody, simplicity and easy vocal phrasing. We cannot see them in this work, which is the more regrettable, as the idea is a happy one. It is musicianly, but this is not what is wanted; melody is more than knowledge, and a tuneful air or two of easy compass for the voice a much greater recommendation than any quantity of skill, in a little work like this. (Weekes & Co.).—"Gay Robin Redcoat." (George Barlow and Walter Slaughter). A capital baritone song, with a "go" in it, and a swinging refrain. (J. B. Cramer & Co.).—"Impromptu" for piano. (Hamilton Robinson). A pleasant little piece that will repay study.—"The Siege of Rochelle." (Henry Farmer). An excellent arrangement of Balfe's opera for violin and pianoforte.—"Aus der Jugendzeit." (Theodor Kirchner). Ten brief sketches for the pianoforte, pleasantly written and very simple. The numbers we prefer are 3, 7, and 9, but all equally commend themselves to the young pianist.—"With Heart Bounding Gaily." (J. Massenet). An English version of the composer's "Chanson de Don César," but the translation is carelessly done. Some notes in the music have French words and no English, and *vice-versa*. Where the music is by such a talented hand, it is worth while to have a careful adaptation.—"Night Hymn at Sea." (A. Goring Thomas). A duet written in the accomplished composer's cultivated style, but are there no more modern words worth setting, may we ask? All the same, a most effective composition.—"The British Tar's Polka." (H. Klusmann). Not bad; or good. We have seen many better and some worse. (From Joseph Williams, Berners Street, W.).—"The Borderland of Heaven." (Edith P. Snowden and A. H. Behrend). The composer of "Auntie" is not in his happiest mood in this, though as a song, it is superior to the recent numerous "Oras" and "Salvas" with which the market has been flooded. "Thou Only." (John Muir and Thos. Hutchinson). This song has given us a headache trying to discover the sense of the words. If the author can explain what to "live" anybody is, he is a genius; otherwise, music decidedly good. But the public is getting weary of nonsense-verses set to music. "It is for You to Say." (Clifton Bingham and Luigi Denza). An expressive and well-written song, inferior to some by the same hand, but both understandable and singable. "Tell Them." (Clifton Bingham and F. P. Tosti). A fair example of the popular ballad, but not quite up to the genial "Signor's" standard of writing. "La Serenata." (F. P. Tosti). A charming Italian song, with a poetic translation by Theo Marzials. "Altre Pagine d'Album." (F. P. Tosti). Twelve delightful songs from a master-hand that, much as it has written, has not yet lost its cunning. (All from G. Ricordi and Co., Regent Street.).—"I Love You Dearly." (J. H. McCarthy and Joseph Fletcher). A musician's setting of a poetic trifle in rondeau-form; somewhat unstudied, but of decided merit. "Buttercups and Daisies." (Henry Morley.) A duet for violins, with pianoforte, viola, and 'cello accompaniments; simple, almost to baldness, though not without a certain grace. It would suit amateurs not over-fond of practising what they play. (Joseph Williams, Berners Street).

Our Amateurs' Play=Box.

It is one thing to feel the pricks of ambition ; it is quite another thing to conscientiously and consistently bend every energy towards the realisation of that ambition. Not a club but has its artistic desire ; not an actor in existence, whether he speak English, Chinese, or Lancashire, but has his own pet longings, confided in the secret hours of night to the pillow or the pier-glass, to follow Irving in Hamlet, Wilson Barrett in Wilfrid Denver, Forbes Robertson in Dunstan Renshaw, or in fact any fine player in a really impressive part, and improve upon the faulty readings each and all are guilty of. But of these thousands, how many score devote time and talent and money to levelling the uphill and down dale road that lies between them and their silently acknowledged goal ? In other words how many are quite in sober, solemn earnest ? One score ? Perhaps. And it is for the very reason that there is so little sincere labour and concentrated endeavour among amateurs that the Irving A.D.C. are entitled to the post of honour. They have a policy of high artistic aim, and stedfastly they pursue it, regardless of every obstacle within and without. Such persistence and courage deserve the warmest praise and prove that the spirit which fires their president animates them, too. To produce "Much Ado About Nothing" is an achievement any body of amateurs might well be proud of. To produce it as the Irving did on the 10th and 12th of December at St. George's Hall, with elaborate effects of dressing and lighting and mounting, with glees and madrigals, gavottes and choirs, processions and masquerades, and countless details demanding infinite thought and care and tact, registers an event of some note in the sphere of theatricals. The choice of the play showed no excessive wisdom, in this direction at all events, for to challenge comparison with one of Mr. Irving's most sumptuous revivals, every point of which must still remain in the memory of those who were found watching this brave attempt to follow in his footsteps, argues too kindly a belief in the charity of playgoing mortals, who will, like Benedick, "be evermore tattling" and instituting "odorous comparisons" which it is meet they should be allowed the least possible opportunity for indulging in. Given the play, though, no other club could have dealt with it so thoroughly or so loyally. Some half-dozen actors could speak blank verse and speak it well. Even the Lyceum could hardly be said to have the advantage of them in this respect. The balance of the piece was well maintained. Comedy had its innings, but prominence was pointedly given to the serious interest, which is prone to lag behind and be half overlooked by reason of the preference of audiences for lighter moods. Thanks to one gifted actor, the moving qualities of the church scene were driven home with quite exceptional power ; and thanks, again, this time to Mr. C. H. Fox, whose ambition it evidently is to be king of costumiers, the stage was always a picture filled with beautifully garbed figures ; the loveliest imaginable Elizabethan dresses in the most delicate and

charming of tints, being, indeed, the certainty upon which everyone could rely for enjoyment when the acting at rare intervals became insipid. For the most part, however, this was buoyant and bright enough. Mrs. William Bell was too much on one note as Beatrice, and she cannot boast—who can?—that wonderful magnetic charm of the Lyceum incomparable; but of sparkling gaiety there was abundance, of point for all the witty sallies there was enough, and of sincere feeling in the more dramatic scenes there was not a little. Clever and piquant, in short, and an admirable foil for Mr. F. Sherbrooke's Benedick, a quiet self-restrained piece of acting, none the less effective and full of humour for being pitched in a low tone and wearing a grave look. Mr. F. A. Roberts has a handsome face and a mellow voice, no little intelligence, and a good share of earnestness. He looked the youthful Prince of Arragon to perfection, but lacked decision and meaning to turn his chances to the best account. Mr. Everitt's Antonio was capital. The chivalrous old fire-eater has not over much to do, but what he had was well done, well spoken, with good accent and good discretion. Poor Don John suffered from an attack of faulty perruquier and the malign influence of melodrama. With a make-up not unfitted for Danny Mann or Hoyley Snayle, his cause was lost immediately he entered upon the scene. The lesson to be learned is "Trust no dauber, howe'er pleasant," and master the secrets of face painting for yourself in leisure hours, "brains within and gas o'erhead." Mr. Ben Webster made no such mistake as Don John. His Claudio was a very exquisite, heroic and charming to a degree. His later scenes were better than the earlier. The more serious the demand upon him, the more readily did he rise to the occasion; and in the remorseful passages that precede the restoration of his slandered love the actor was especially natural in his suggestion of deep distress. Miss Webster has all the physical qualities Hero needs. *Petite*, fair, of simple manner, and shy ways, there is something delightfully winning about this clever *ingénue's* treatment of persecuted heroines. The great scene was spiritedly handled, the agony of grief courageously attacked, and with a little more abandonment to the wild pleadings to her father, this Hero could be set beside any of recent years. The loudest applause was rightly reserved for Mr. Frank Haldon, whose Friar Francis was decidedly the cleverest and most effective piece of acting in the whole production. The play was literally held together and raised to a high level of interest by the exquisite delivery of the Friar's long speeches and the dignity of the actor's bearing. More poetic interpretation of a difficult character could not well have been. Rough vigour of a kind that should prove valuable was much to the fore in the Leonato of Mr. Rawson Buckley, who needs, however, to study Mr. G. H. Lewes on the subject of "the subsidence of Emotion." Mr. William Bell spoke Borachio's lines excellently, and Mr. Stalman was satisfactory as Conrade. His unreadiness, though, nearly spoiled a very important scene. A sweet voice was used with great taste and pretty skill by Mr. Arthur Comyns in the unaccompanied ballad "Sigh no more Ladies," and comedy, truly Shakesperean in method, broad, strong, and bold, stamped Mr. Grout's Dogberry, one of the hits of the evening. Such able acting as this is rarely seen on the amateur stage, and Mr. Grout's claim to the rank of premier comedian was advanced a very important stage. With all its shortcomings of individual effort, therefore, this revival of "Much Ado" was a most interesting

experiment, and should lead the Irving Club to grapple as determinedly with plays not quite so well known and perhaps only very little less dramatic and picturesque in form.

What may be called a "star" performance was given at St George's Hall on the 11th ult. The best men of the Canterbury Stagers, the Romany, Irving, and Crystal Palace Clubs (some of the "men" being ladies! but that's by the way) made up as strong a cast for "Pygmalion and Galatea" and "Good for Nothing" as the amateur stage could possibly supply. And Miss Mabel Clerk, by reputation the most versatile and accomplished amateur to be found in England, heading these picked supporters, meant something very much out of the common. I had no conception that pleasure seekers could do such strenuous work. Tired to death as I am of Mr. Gilbert's impossible and unpoetic comedy, I was yet charmed and delighted as though it were all a novelty, and Miss Mary Anderson, Mrs. Langtry, and Miss Fortescue had never been. Here was a Galatea who was actually a girl, really ingenuous, innocent indeed, and never an actress. The amateur boards rarely frame a picture that endures in memory, but here were half-a-dozen I would not willingly lose. The comedy with Chrysos and Pygmalion was all so gentle and so winning that, *blasé* as the ultra-fashionable audience that filled the hall undoubtedly was (though to its credit be it said, it speedily became open-eyed and even open-mouthed when it realised the cleverness of the acting), I verily believe not a soul but would have *encored* the scenes, could we have had our way. There was something eminently touching in the simplicity of the whole study, and grace and delicacy in thought and tone and action lent surprising charm to every phase of the poor statue's brief existence. An expressive face, a musical voice, a slight and flexible figure and winning features enabled the actress to look both Grecian and heroic, the only want being in the statuesque development wherein lay Miss Anderson's chief claim to the part. Emotional stress seemed, however, beyond Miss Clerk's strength. The minor key was reached and a pathetic note gently touched. But of tragedy there was none. Tenderness and heartache summed up her grief. And it was felt that the full measure of her suffering was not conveyed. But for the womanliness of the study and its charm no praise could be too high; and the success attained was most conspicuous. Mr. Boulton, in deference no doubt to the poetic leanings of his companion, kept down the dry and cynical humour of Pygmalion. He thus denied himself a good deal of cheap applause, but he should feel recompensed in learning that, despite a tinge of sameness, there were convincing merits in abundance—sincerity, dignity, manliness, poetic feeling, and a considerable command of fine resonant declamation. Mr. W. J. Fletcher is the best Leucippe I have seen—better even than Mr. Macklin. His rich voice and martial bearing are immensely effective, and he speaks blank verse as well as Mr. Willard. Mrs. William Bell took a harsh view of Cynisca's jealousy, but the curse created a marked impression. The last act was played with genuine feeling, and she looked a strikingly handsome figure in her orange robes. Miss Julia Grant and Mr. "Quintin" were inimitable as Daphne and Chrysos. A wealth of humour lies in each; no funnier figures could be imagined than these of the podgy, rosy art patron and his towering, gaunt, forbidding spouse. And both were played with great finish and detail. Miss Webster, the daintiest little *ingenue* to be

found in London, made a delightful Myrine, and when acting was not wanted, supplied an artistic repast the eye could not well tire of. At the close of the play a quarter of an hour sufficed for a veritable marvel. Mrs. Bancroft was versatile and so is Mr. Tree, but I can recollect no feat of theirs to equal the amazing change of this graceful, classical Galatea into the sloppy, shock-headed, tattered, uncouth, pathetically-comical gutter brat Nan. Not a vestige of the pretty actress was to be seen. Not a gesture, not an accent betrayed her identity. And only the closest attention detected an occasional note in the voice, and confirmed the programme in its assurance that this was Miss Mabel Clerk. I can now understand the praise she has received, and I hasten to endorse it. This study of Nan is brilliant, worthy of any character actress I can recall, and taken in conjunction with the Galatea, it constitutes an amazing *tour-de-force*, to which I can only liken Mr. Tree in Falstaff and Gringoire during the same evening. When the sun shines, even electric light is nowhere, and though Mr. Trollope, Mr. Walker, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Maitland Dicker set an example to several gentlemen at the Haymarket in naturalness and in humour, there were no eyes or ears for anyone but Nan, whose gifted playing was the admiration of everybody.

The Burlington A.D.C. are much in need of that abhorrent person without whom no actor's study can be complete, the "d——d good-natured friend." They possess two gentlemen, Mr. Wood and Mr. McQueen, who are not without some of the qualifications of comedians, and on the strength of this battalion they attempt to scale the heights (or sound the depths) of Mr. Byron's stage humour. They don't understand Byronic atmosphere; but that matters nothing. They cannot realise the difficulty of firing a joke straight down the throats of their audience. And their notions of "business" are not yet full grown. Then why choose such a play as "Not Such a Fool as He Looks"?—a play that has no interest apart from the individual efforts of the actors, and one that stood a little wobbly even with Byron, Edward Terry, and William Elton to prop it up. There is no cleverness in getting off smart wheezes, especially of this dry-polished and cold-cut order, unless they are got off naturally. And how to be natural on the stage has puzzled most of our best actors, let alone the worse. Leave Byron for Jones. What you lose in "toney" flavour in the name, you more than make up in soundness and value in the work. The dialogue may be heavier, but it will suit you the better, Messieurs of the Burlington. And when you have burrowed through all Mr. Jones's healthy and possible comedies, turn your attention to Mr. Robertson, Mr. Grundy, and Mr. Pinero. By the time you have finished with them, another dramatist or two will be to the fore, perhaps. If not, you can try a hand at the classics. In any case don't waste your time over twaddle such as this, although you are dazzled by the showering arrows of wit; for you and your clever companions, Miss Standen and Miss Baldry, wilfully despise the talents you possess when you rehearse and study for some weeks the comic-journal brilliance (and inanity) of third-rate Byron-comedy.

Earnestness is the equivalent of charity in the trinity of the actor's virtues. To be devoted to your work, thin and silly though it may seem, is to travel three parts of the road towards the goal of mastery. And when a company is so deadly earnest as was that at St. George's

Hall, on the 28th. ult., it is a thankless task to point out a good many faults. "School" is a weak play, from the Cinderella opening to the senseless tag; but discreetly handled by a sympathetic body of actors, its unquestioned prettiness can be made as charming as though the drama of problems had never been, and the day of Ibsen and Dumas, Daudet and Buchanan, had yet to come. Mrs. Charles Sim is always clever, whether it is farce or tragedy she undertakes; but her nous as a *régisseur* is fully equal to her ability as an actress. She had picked her company with unerring judgment. From the soldierly and distinguished Poyntz of Captain Darling, to the highly coloured Krux of Mr. E. H. Clark, everyone was physically suited, and the majority could render an artistic account of the mental attributes and characteristics as well. Mrs. Sim herself played Bella with genuine sympathy and quiet effect. The love scene was an admirable piece of natural acting, of which Mr. Ashby Darby, an ideal Beaufoy in youth and look and bearing, contributed his full share. Miss Lilian Hingston was merry and spirited as Naomi, not perhaps with the peculiar unnatural daring of that trying young person, but consistently and with great point. Mr. Trollope and Mrs. Copleston were of course just the couple for Dr. and Mrs. Sutcliffe, whose scholastic mannerisms were emphasised with much humour; Mr. Clark was at times a shade melodramatic as the impossible usher, but the force of his acting gave the play weight; and Captain Darling, though too restless and rapid, suggested the lazy lounge better than most amateur light comedians would. Farintosh was unsatisfying, but then he always is, even when Mr. Hare plays him, so there is little discredit in that. Mrs. Sim had the foresight to double Mr. Trollope's work by giving him the stage management, the result being that the school scenes were fraught with an amount of spirit that I for one no longer expected to find in them.

If "Jim the Penman" had not filled the Haymarket for the best part of a year and forced everybody's gossiping tongue to wag about the author, no one would have raked from Mr. French's dusty shelves Sir Charles Young's failure of years ago, a powerful play called "Charms." Drawing-room melodrama of this class, brimful of lurid Counts and repentant gamblers, raffish freshers and broad-minded parsons, cannot be attacked without plenty of muscular power and lung energy among the actors. The Clapham club have one or two good men and true, who are not afraid of the sound of their own voices, and who can swoop down the stage, catch the glare of the footlights on an upturned eyeball, and remain so till the nervous portion of their audience shivers in anticipation of the villainy such horrors must portend. Mr. Uwins and Mr. Martin Cahill are useful gentlemen who have thus caught the Willard manner, and chiefly owing to their rough vigour and rugged force, and the manly acting of Mr. Collins as the hero, a none too easy part, all went merry as a marriage bell. The murder of poor Hooker impressed; the wiles of the Marquesa, played weakly but with variety and charm by Miss St. Lawrence, were dramatically sufficient; and the flutterings of the foolish moth Medwyn seemed not inexplicable. Mr. W. R. Clark, generally to be trusted if a strongly marked character wants filling, made a capital Sir Stephen Glendinning, easy, fluent, and expressive. Mr. Tyrrell managed to infuse some distinct humour into Rhyl, and Philip was breezily played by Mr. Frank Hughes. Miss Ingress Bell made a gentle heroine, and there was promise in the mild performances of

Miss Parham and Miss Spires. In a four act drama in which conflicting passions of love and hatred, ambition and revenge, are skillfully if not realistically treated, there were naturally a hundred feelings visible which only long experience could conceal, but this venture into the regions of drama was a thousand times more interesting than the usual dabbling in farcical comedy.

The West London A.D.C. go far afield for the plays they produce, and their enterprise meets with the success it deserves. A new play by one of their members, "The Tidal Hour," and a romantic comedy drama, well known in the provinces, "Noblesse Oblige," were the items of their programme on the 1st February. Mr. Rex Watney has written a virile little piece, which betrays the hand of the novice full often, but still has purpose and strength to commend it. With a less hackneyed plot, the author's gift of character drawing and smart writing should enable him to fashion a very entertaining play. He and Mr. Smart acted with some power, but Miss Vincent should go through a course of comedy, to get rid of stagey gestures and expressions; and Mr. Stanley should go to the theatre every night for a year to learn what acting really is made up of. The heavier drama weighed too much on the consciences of some of the actors, who in trying to do what they conceived to be their duty, over acted to an extent that occasionally demanded pity rather than irritation. Mr. Martin Cahill, however, did good work as the distressed convict hero, and if his manner were less awkward, and his actions more dramatic, he would rapidly develope into a very useful strong "lead." Miss Davies Webster and Miss Maud Thompson showed that they understood their parts, and were clever enough to give consistent renderings. Mr. Percy Dickinson was not ineffective as Dr. Lennard, though the character required a more incisive style. Mr. Smart was manly and firm as Cecil Mainwaring, and Mr. F. Wood threw a welcome tone of comedy into his humorous sketch of Charley Hodgson. In brief, the incidents of the play were handled vigorously, but without finish enough; the dialogue was well delivered, but without sufficient point, and the performance as a whole suggested the want of a trained stage manager, and another dozen or two rehearsals.

With a president like Mr. Henry Arthur Jones, the Comedy Club should attempt something nobler than "Nita's First." What is the use of having a King unless you are going to be ruled by him, and, incidentally, proud of him. But fogs and rains have a dismal effect, and perhaps these finely-generalised troops felt they could not put on their Sunday clothes and go on grand parade. At any rate, whatever the reason was, they shirked their obvious duty and went in for light and airy frisking on the 4th ult. Considering the difficulties of farce acting, which looks as though a baby could shine in it and which really wants double the finish and three times the care of any other form of the gentle craft, these somewhat ponderous actors did very well. The piece dragged a good deal, and a generous allowance of time, after every point made, did not freshen things much. Still there was a lot of humour in the nervous acting of Mr. Leonard; and Mr. Bourne and Mr. Lang scurried about the stage with untiring energy. Mr. Davis was a passable specimen of the "Johnnie," and what boyishness lies in gawky manners and a bland smile was

well suggested by Mr. Hartley. Miss Hemery was a pretty and girl-ish heroine ; Miss Masters and Miss Stone were comical as old ladies of the usual farcical tendencies ; and Miss Cole threw spirit into her playing. The audience, happy people, having never seen or heard the play before (much less sat through it a dozen times), found most of the fun racy and rollicking, and vehemently applauded most of the sayings and doings of this truant company.

Can irresponsible amateurs, who have no bread and butter to earn from their masters the public, give one thought to the sufferings of those driven, dragged, and fascinated creatures they compel to sit in front and watch them ? No, they must be pitiless ; worse than Don Alva or the Inquisition. Else why should an executive including Mr. Grout and Mr. Morten Henry, try to galvanise that sawdust dummy "Partners for Life" ! And at the second performance of a new club, too ! one within measurable distance of the Crystal Palace Athenæum with its noble records of art achievements. Reform it altogether ! Such human beings as the witty Byron crowds his pages with, are, in this work, nothing but gross caricatures ; and it is only bad art that can make such daubs look the glaring chromos that still appeal to the taste of a large minority. To praise bad art is not my function, and therefore these actors must do better work before they can expect to feast upon a banquet of enconium here. The presence of Mr. Grout as Muggles, Mr. Westerton, Mr. Phillips, Mr. Kenyon Bright, Miss Millais, and Mrs. Ascher, ensured a smooth, a capable, and at moments an interesting performance, but the judicious can but grieve at this choice of play, an attempt to deny the Darwinian truth that the fittest only shall survive.



Our Omnibus=Box.

TERENTIUS AFER PUBLIUS, ESQ.

20th January, 1890.

MY DEAR TERENCE,—

You have most probably observed that there are two issues of art in which we of to-day are sadly lacking cultivation—atmosphere in pictures and the delivery of blank verse. Of these the latter comes under my province ; and so for a snap at the subject. "*Je vous écris*," as the French lady wrote, "*parceque je n'ai rien à faire ; je finis, parceque je n'ai rien à dire*." No, not quite that last yet, my boy, for I be a garrulous fiend, who will yet tickle your auricle for you with straw of chaff before consenting to forego that freedom of speech which is the Briton's proud boast, and the other man's annoyance. To proceed. Blank verse is not, as so many people would seem to imagine, rhymed couplets with the jingle struck out to save trouble. It is, or should be, that perfect accordance of words by which only may be exhibited the true dignity and grandeur of a language. Controlled by certain natural laws, it should yet march to no measured beat, but should sway, and pause, and hasten, with never a lack of grace, and never a forgetfulness of the abiding step, to the minuet music of imagination. It is not "the right-butter-woman's rank to

market," but rather, if I may say, should compare with the advance in some conqueror's triumph of a royal tiger, whose rebellious beauty of movement emphasises the measured blare of the instruments without retarding the procession. Grant this, my boy, and echo our wail that so few should recognise the importance of matriculating in the truest elocution. Old stagers will tell us that the art was frequent in their youth. Let that pass. Tradition is a glorious thing, yet it lies parlously near the border-land of narrow-mindedness. We have facilities of literature historical, of literature biographical, of remote analysis, undreamed of by our forbears, and we are shrewd in our generation. We know that Garrick, and Mrs. Siddons, and Kemble, and Macready were notable actors in their day, but that the time they represented, and reflected, and took their colour from, was a time when men had not learned to appreciate independence of thought and habit; when the scope of a man's art was the cubic measure of his surroundings; when fashions of thought as of dress ran in tight-fitting grooves. Whisper the blasphemy, ye winds! I believe if the ghost of John Philip Kemble should play Hamlet to a modern audience, it would be cried back to Hades in a babble of rippling laughter. Undoubtedly these great persons could spout blank verse in the blankest style; but undoubtedly we shouldn't much care to listen to them. For we have a few amongst us to expound the art without art in its purity. I mind me of one, Hermann Vezin, who in the matter of giving weighed expression to sentences, I would back against Johnson's Garrick. I mind me of a certain Richard Mansfield, than whom no sweeter spoken hunch-back Dick has trod the boards. Yet what a leech is this stage tradition! When this same Richard some time back essayed the part and gave its reverence a turn, how it hunted him out of court and shrieked for the old stilted business it had known of old and couldn't endure to forego! Even papers of advanced views joined in the hue and cry, and poor Dick was doomed. Yet he had done well, and deserved a fairer fate. Then, too, how this Catholic press disdains the first flights of novitiates over Shakesperian fields! If so-and-so is not an embryo Macready, a curse upon his impudence in entering the ground hallowed of tradition! Yet, my masters, is it better to fail with Shakespeare than succeed with—the author of "Tra-la-la Tosca," shall we say? "For never anything can be amiss, when simpleness and duty tender it." And so, a word in your ear, Mr. Benson of the Globe, whose fairies are the prettiest elves that ever trod painted greensward. Blank verse should not be intoned; Lysander was by no means educated for the Church. I swear when I heard the close of your opening love-speech to Hermia, I felt inclined to follow with "here endeth the first lesson." But you have an Oberon who can suggest the harmony and give colour to the musical cæsura of great verse, and him honour and cherish. And never fear tradition. It is the *bête-noir* of art. Why it is only on the stage that a section of the public looks for it now-a-days. In all else eccentricity to the extremes of deformity is courted, and if you can prove "Yes," "No," you may be crowned with bays. And that is not so difficult as one might imagine. A wicked boy in a school I was once at, if asked if he had committed some fault (of which he was undoubtedly guilty), would answer: "Nos-sir," on this iniquitous system of reasoning, that "*nos*" in Latin means "we," and "*oui*" in French means "yes," and so reconcile his conscience to the fraud. Well, that is the fine-art of lying, which while it would now procure him a seat amongst the intellectual elect, in those days prevented him from taking any seat for some time to come. Eccentricity? ye gods, Terence! I think we shall become a world of hysterics in our mad search for it. I know a man, who, utterly despairing of personal notoriety in any legitimate path, is contemplating turning everything upside down in his sitting room—chairs and tables on their backs; vases on their upper ends; book-cases and pictures with their faces to the wall—but stay! Is he so crazy after all? The question opens up such a vast field of conjecture that I dare not venture upon it. I have poked my head out of my shell and touched a thorn, and would sink back into obscurity. It is more comfortable, after all, to do as our fathers did, and canter jog-trot along the macadam road of civilization, unexcited by the whooping rush of hounds and horsemen over that breakneck country yonder. Let them dislocate their joints if they will. The goal of our daily constitutional shall be and remain the digestible dinner, the warm fireside, the nodding to a welcome rest over our favourite author. All reverence to the placid old bodies, with their little hoard of maxims.

on customs and tradition ! A blessing on the venerable noddles that have never known the aching fever of competition ! At that same school I spoke of a while ago, a boy who was once reading before an examining body of masters, misquoted the word "partridges" for "patriachs," and was told by one of their number not to make game of the latter. And so all honour be to white hairs and trite aphorisms, and that not least from

Yours distantly,

THE CALL-BOY.

We desire to call attention to a *matinée* performance to be given at the Grand Theatre, Islington, on March 11th, for the benefit of Mr. Edgar Newbound, a clever actor and adaptor, long connected with Mrs. Sara Lane's Theatre in Hoxton. He has been stricken down with a lingering illness, which has so reduced him in circumstances that his brother artists saw the necessity for arranging a testimonial performance. The programme is not in such a forward condition as to enable us to publish full particulars, but we promise readers who care to patronise this deserving benefit that they will be well pleased with the arrangements made for their amusement. There will also be an evening performance at the Britannia Theatre on the 12th inst. for the same object.

"Marjorie," the comic opera now playing at the Prince of Wales's, proves a great success. Since its production in January, Miss Agnes Huntington has retired from the cast. For three nights Mr. T. A. Shale acquitted himself well in her part, but Mr. Joseph Tapley now appears as Wilfrid, and for Mr. Hayden Coffin new songs have been introduced, as well as a good duet for Mr. Monkhouse and Mr. James. Miss Camille D'Arville has won golden opinions in the title rôle, and Miss Phyllis Broughton (Cicely) and Madame Amadi (The Lady Alicia) gain much applause. The plot of "Marjorie" was fully treated in the August number of THE THEATRE. The subsequent alterations though slight are decided improvements, and the book has been altogether written up.

"A Sinless Secret," by Mr. Frank Lindo, produced on January 7, at the Comedy, we were unable for want of space to notice last month. It did not bear out the promise of the author's former efforts, and proved to be crude in construction and slightly bombastic in language. It was the old story of a wife losing her husband's confidence through her concealing from him the fact that the man she was meeting clandestinely was her own father, a spy and everything that was bad. On the same afternoon a sad little play "Mademoiselle de Lira," by Mrs. G. Thompson and Miss Kate Sinclair, was well rendered by the joint authoresses, the latter particularly distinguishing herself in an *ingénue* part.

"Cyril's Success" was revived at the Criterion on January 25th, 1890, but only ran about a fortnight. It was first produced at the Globe theatre, November 28th, 1868, when Mr. W. H. Vernon made his *début* and played Cyril Cuthbert; Mr. John Clark, Matthew Pincher; David Fisher, Major Treherne; Miss Maggie Brennan, the Hon. Frederick Titeboy; Charles Warner, Viscount Glycerine; Miss Henrade, Mrs. Cuthbert; Mrs. Stevens, Miss Grannett; Miss Fanny Hughes, Mrs. Singleton Bliss. The piece, though artificial, was long considered as H. J. Byron's best achievement in pure comedy, and contains some of the author's brightest and most witty dialogue. On the occasion of its latest revival, all the sparkle seemed to have disappeared, the jokes fell flat, and there was such an air of unreality about the whole performance that the audience listened apathetically and left the theatre as though they considered an evening had been wasted. And it must be confessed that the result was almost entirely due to the actors and actresses, only two of whom, Miss E. Brunton (a sister of Mrs. Kendal), as Miss Grannett, and Mr. Arthur Elwood as Major Treherne, appeared to enter completely into the spirit of the play. Mr. Leonard Boyne as the hero was only really good in the club scene. Mr. David James as Pincher, the journalist, quite missed the cynicism of the character, but redeemed himself somewhat in the last act. Miss F. Frances was a colourless Hon. Fred Titeboy. Miss Olga Brandon played Mrs. Cuthbert in far too lachrymose a vein, and Miss Compton, though attractive looking, was anything but a fascinating Mrs.

Singleton Bliss. Two small parts, the Viscount Glycerine of Mr. G. Stanton and the Pepper of Mr. G. B. Phillips, were effectively rendered.

A very clever and amusing farce "The Best Man Wins," was produced at the Novelty on January 27th. It is by Mark Melford, and tells of two foster-brothers who, both loving the same girl, are so unselfish as each to plead the cause of the other, and in order to induce the young lady to decide, the parson is called in, who settles the matter by winning the prize himself. In it the author and Mr. James Woodbridge were very good.

The Opera Comique reopened on Monday, February 3, under the management of Mr. H. Gitten Lonsdale, who commenced his season with a two weeks' run of "A Noble Brother." The piece has been successful in the provinces, for which it is better suited than for London, for it is stilted in language and utterly improbable. The hero has taken upon himself the guilt of a murder committed by his twin brother, has been confined in Sing-Sing (the scene is laid in America) for some 17 years, escapes and wanders the country as "Jerry the Tramp." Recognised by Harry Travers, a villain who has seen him in prison, he is compelled by his tyrant to claim as his daughter a girl who has been adopted by some rich people, so that Travers may force her into a marriage with himself. Jerry, however, has learnt to love the girl, and rather than she shall be sacrificed, he goes back to finish his term of imprisonment. Eventually, of course, the guilty brother on his death bed confesses to the crime. Jerry is released and inherits all the deceased's wealth, and Travers is magnanimously allowed to go scot free. Mr. W. J. Summers is decidedly a quaint and original eccentric comedian, and in the third act, where the struggle takes place between his affection for his daughter and the horror he feels of having to return to prison, showed considerable strength and pathos. He is the author of the "comedy-drama," which was evidently written by him with regard only to his own special powers. Miss Ellen Boucher was pleasing and intelligent as Mona Leigh, the tramp's daughter.

"Our Boys" was revived with every success at the Criterion on February 11th, and it is quite possible that no change will be required to be made in the evening bill till Mr. Wyndham's (now rapidly approaching) return. Mr. David James is once again Perkyn Middlewick, the loving, passionate, and obstinate old butlerman, a part that he plays to perfection. Mr. Leonard Boyne is good as his son Charles, but a little spoils an otherwise excellent performance by his pronounced mannerisms. Mr. E. W. Gardiner's Talbot Champneys is one of the best bits of light comedy we have seen, original and clever; Mr. Arthur Elwood is an aristocratic Sir Geoffery Champneys; and Miss Olga Brandon and Miss Frances are pleasing as Mary Melrose and Violet.

Friday, February 14th, saw the 150th representation of Mr. Fred Horner's farcical comedy, "The Bungalow." Toole's theatre was crowded in every part, and the house certainly never looked so pretty, for in honour of the occasion, and it also being St. Valentine's Day, real flowers, consisting of roses, sprays of mimosa, white lavender, lilies, etc., were hung in festoons and garlands all over the theatre, giving it a charming appearance. In addition to this, each member of the audience was presented with a souvenir in the shape of an Indian hand punkah, on which were some twenty sketches of the most striking scenes in "The Bungalow," the piece itself going to shouts of laughter. "Isalda," a poetical play in one act and in blank verse, by Fred Horner, was also seen for the first time. It proved to be decidedly tragic, and in marked contrast to the other item of the programme. Don Antonio, a feudal lord of the borders of Spain, has brought before him one Isalda, a girl who is accused of being one of a band of smugglers who cross into France. Don Antonio has seen and loved her, and promises to pardon her (for she is condemned to death for infringement of the law) if she will be his. Isalda, however, is betrothed to a Comte Henri Delaurières, a French feudal lord, and it is to meet him that she so frequently crosses the frontier. The Count appears and demands her release, but Don Antonio behaves in such a dastardly manner that the Count forces him to a duel there and then. Don Antonio is mortally wounded, but does not

die till he has signed a "passport through the lines" enabling the lovers to escape. The dresses were picturesque, and the parts were capably filled by Mr. Bassett Roe, Mr. Matthew Brodie, and Miss Vane Featherston. The author had to bow his acknowledgments in response to a hearty call.

On Friday afternoon, February 14th, "The Home Feud," original play in three acts, by Walter Frith, was produced at the Comedy. In its present form it will scarcely be seen again, for it is too sketchy altogether, and in places too talky. There is, however, sufficient in the original idea on which the play is based for the foundation of a good drama. Captain Hargreaves, having temporarily lost his sight in Egypt, is saved from death and nursed back to health by Helen Joliffe, and they fall in love with each other, but without any mutual confession. The soldier goes to Germany for treatment, and his sight is restored, and immediately on his return he enters and declares his love for Helen. He has made a mistake, however, for he has proposed to Louise Brunton, a scheming woman with a past, who has, to escape from poverty and dependence, determined to entrap the well-to-do soldier if she can; and she succeeds, for Hargreaves weds her. She has already been married to John Beilby, a thorough scamp and forger, but she imagines him to be dead. He re-appears, but as his wife is determined not to lose the position she has fought for, she makes an appointment with him for the dead of night, and he is to enter by the conservatory, when she will shoot him down as though he were a burglar. She fires and misses. Beilby snatches the revolver from her, and as she is attempting to escape, draws upon her, and she falls dead—a sudden ending—leaving to the audience to conjecture what they will as to the future of the various characters. Miss Gertrude Kingston was hard, jerky, and unfeminine as Louise Brunton; Mr. Nutcombe Gould sympathetic as Captain Hargreaves; Miss May Whitty was a very sweet Helen Joliffe; and Mr. William Herbert manly and honest as an unselfish, honourable brother to the scamp John Beilby, effectively played by Mr. Scott Buist. Miss Eva Moore was natural and uneffected in an *ingénue* part.

"My Brother's Sister" (Only in Fun), was played at a Gaiety *matinée* on February 15th, and was enthusiastically received. It was originally produced at the Princes' Theatre, Manchester, September 3, 1888, and a notice appeared in the October number of "THE THEATRE" of that year. As then stated, the piece enables Miss Minnie Palmer to assume the character of a shoeblack, a little "help," a society dame full of *espiglerie* and mischief, and a dashing young naval cadet; and in these impersonations she acts, sings, and dances with her accustomed grace, vivacity and charm. The cast was a good one. Mr. Herbert Sparling was very original and humorous as Waldcoffer Grosserby, an impecunious "dude"; Miss Gladys Homfrey attractive as a rather vindictive belle, Miss Geraldine Previous; and Mr. C. W. Allison and Mr. George Bernage gave capital character sketches of Mr. Parker and Officer Schultz. "My Brother's Sister" was to be repeated on the two following Saturdays, and will then resume its highly successful tour in the provinces, prior to Miss Minnie Palmer's revisiting America.

"Les Cloches de Corneville," Planquette's most famous work, was reproduced at the Opera Comique on Monday, February 17th, 1890. There is no occasion to descant on the tunefulness of its melodies, its general brightness, and drawing power, for the opera has been heard in every part of the United Kingdom. Though Mr. Shiel Barry has played the part of Gaspard, the miser, some 3,000 times, he never "held the house" more completely than he did on this revival. His acting was tragic in its intensity. Mr. Charles Ashford, the original Gobo, was also excellent; and Mr. Tom Paulton quaint as The Bailie. Miss Helen Capet, as Germaine, sang true, but her voice—a good one—requires training, and she lacks expression sadly. In the absence of Miss Irene Verona, who was to have appeared as Serpolette, Miss Marian Erle, who undertook the part at very short notice, acquitted herself remarkably well. The chorus and orchestra are both worthy of very high praise indeed, the scenery by Messrs. Ryan and Burns is exquisitely painted (the stained glass windows in the Chateau, by P. Ignatius Knowles, deserve special mention), and the dresses by Alias were charming.

"Tabitha's Courtship," by Eva and Florence Bright, wants severe pruning ; it should play at least a quarter of an hour shorter time. The characters are not at all badly drawn and there is a good spice of humour running through the little play. By the clever contrivance of one Charlie Mordant, an old professor of natural history, and a lady of a certain age with a weakness for poodles, are brought to decide on entering into matrimony, though but for his plotting they would never have dreamt of it. Mr. Cecil Thornbury as the professor and Miss Florence Bright as an *ingenue* decidedly scored. Curtailed, "Tabitha's Courtship" should be in demand by amateurs and might even do for a first piece.

"Quicksands," comedy drama by Charlotte E. Morland, adapted from Mrs. Lovett Cameron's novel "A Devout Lover," may at least claim originality in its final scene, but the dialogue is generally commonplace, and the work though in many places interesting and having grip, is to a certain extent crude. The first act is decidedly the best. The plot turns on the generous (in one sense) self-denial of a man, who marries a woman he does not love in order to save a woman that he does, and who in her turn sacrifices her life to save her rival's. Mr. Walter Russell as Matthew Dane, Mr. Laurence Cautley as Geoffrey, his son, and Mr. Gilbert Yorke (a very young actor) as Albert Trichet, were particularly good. Mr. Edgar Smart as Miles Faulkner, and Mr. Ivan Watson (in a dual *rôle*) were worthy of praise. Miss Florence Bright as a frank sensible English girl, Dulcie Halliday was clever ; Miss Robins was a little stagey but impressive in the strongly emotional character of Rose de Brefour. The authoress would have done wisely not to have appeared as Angel Halliday ; with the anxiety and nervousness attendant on the first production of her own work, it was impossible for her to do herself or the part justice. "Quicksands" was well received by a very fashionable and crowded audience.

Miss Olga Brandon, one of the handsomest actresses we have on the stage, was born of American parents in Australia in 1865, and received her education there till 1878, when she left for China and subsequently for America, and commenced her dramatic career in New York, October 1884, as Edith in "The Private Secretary," at the Madison Square Theatre, followed by Mrs. Smith ("In Chancery"), Minnie ("Engaged"), and Lydia Haversack ("Twins"). Miss Brandon first appeared in England at the Royalty, Jan. 20, 1887, under Mr. Willie Edouin's management, as Grace Goldring ("Modern Wives"), and Mrs. Mumford Merry ("A Tragedy"), in both of which characters the young actress achieved successes. A six months' tour in America followed, during which engagement with Mr. J. S. Clarke, Miss Brandon played lead in the old comedies, Ophelia ("Hamlet"), Pauline ("Lady of Lyons"), and on her return to London became a member of Mr. and Mrs. Kendal's company, and appeared as Athenais ("Ironmaster"), Jenny ("Queen's Shilling"), Christina Haggerston ("The Squire"), Lady Ingram ("Scrap of Paper"), and created the parts of Rhoda ("The Weaker Sex")—a most admirable performance ; Philippa ("Two Friends") ; and Lady Dolly ("White Lie"), all highly spoken of. Mr. Charles Wyndham next secured Miss Brandon's valuable aid to appear as Esther ("Caste"), a charming portrayal, Mrs. Cuthbert ("Cyril's Success"), and as Mary Melrose ("Our Boys"). Miss Olga Brandon joins Mr. Alexander's company at the Avenue in September as leading lady, and will no doubt increase the reputation she has already gained as an established favourite.

Lack of space precludes more than a few remarks in the present number of THE THEATRE on the latest productions at the Garrick, but a full notice shall appear in the next issue of the magazine. Sufficient to say that both pieces were pronounced eminent successes. Mr. Wynn Miller's "Dream Faces" is exquisite in sentiment, and was acted thoroughly well. "A Pair of Spectacles" has been most happily adapted by Mr. Sydney Grundy, is full of sparkling dialogue, and was done complete justice to by Mr. Hare, who has a character in the benevolent Benjamin Goldfinch that is one of his most delightful impersonations. He is ably seconded by Mr. Charles Groves. Mr. Sydney Brough and Mr. F. H. Knight are both excellent. The two pieces constitute one of the best programmes in London.

After playing a round of his favourite characters, Mr. Toole appeared for the last time at his own theatre previous to his departure for Australia on Tuesday, Feb. 11, as Robert Spicer Romford in "Artful Cards," and Mr. Spriggins in "Ici on Parle Français."

At the Park Town Hall, Battersea (an excellent little theatre for amateurs, by the way), a very poetic version by Miss E. Bessle and Mr. S. Herbert Basing of *Gringoire*, was given on February 4. The work was much applauded, and was done great justice to by the joint author in the name part, the authoress as Loyse, and by Miss Mary Bessle as Nicole Andry. Mr. Frank Westerton exhibited a good conception of the character of Louis XI.

Miss Rosina Filippi, who has already shown a poetical tendency in her children's pantomime, "Little Goody Two Shoes," produced a fairy sketch at the Town Hall, Chelsea, on Friday, Jan 31. It is entitled "An Idyll of New Year's Eve" and is graceful in sentiment and design, but too thin for the general public's acceptance. As it may be made the medium for the wearing of some very pretty dresses, marshalling in review as it does the various months of the year, etc., it might find favour with amateurs for home representation.

In the March number, 1888, of THE THEATRE, accompanying his portrait, there appeared a notice of Mr. Edward S. Willard's dramatic career. Since that date he has added to his laurels, notably by his performances of Count Freund in "Christina," Count Donella in "To the Death," ("Mr. Barnes of New York,") Sir Darrell Erne in "The Monk's Room," and Cyrus Blenkarn in "The Middleman," from which our group is taken. Owing principally to his great performance, this play (produced August 27, 1889, at the Shaftesbury Theatre, of which Mr. Willard then became joint lessee with Mr. John Lart), which has already run some 150 nights, appears likely to hold the boards until such time as the principal character leaves England to fill the same rôle, and, we doubt not, achieve as great a triumph in America.

A full account of Miss Annie Hughes' experience on the stage up to that date will be found in the February number of 1888, in which her portrait appeared as one of the "Two Roses." Miss Annie Hughes continues to increase in favour, and her rendering of Nancy Blenkarn in "The Middleman" is one of the most intelligent and *piquante* performances that has been seen.

Mr. E. W. Garden, though he does not ignore the advantages he acquired by the playing of small parts in the provinces, etc., dates his real theatrical career from 1872, when he joined Mr. J. H. Montague's company at the Globe, and was in the original cast of "Partners for Life," "Forgiven," "Spur of the Moment," and "Fine Feathers." In the latter his Daniel Dole was universally commended in the highest terms. Mr. Garden was the original Don Bolero in "Giroflé Girofla," and for four years, from 1875 to 1879, played Talbot Champneys in "Our Boys," and Gibson Greene in "Married in Haste," in the provinces with complete success everywhere. He has had but few engagements because they have all been long ones. Mr. Garden joined Mr. Toole's company when the latter gentleman assumed the management of the then Folly Theatre, and was with him for three years, during fifteen months of which he played Sir Robert Boobleton in "The Upper Crust." At the Adelphi he was the Joe Buzzard of "In the Ranks," for 18 months, the Tom Dossiter in "Harbour Lights," for 18 months, and Reuben Armstrong in "The Bells of Haslemere" for 10 months. How long he will appear in "The Middleman," depends simply on the run of the piece, for a better Jesse Pegg could not possibly be found.

We have received the following from a contributor:—

NO ROSE WITHOUT ITS THORN.

Dining the other day with a very old friend of mine—a veteran actor long since retired from the boards—I happened to make some careless remark—"across the walnuts and the wine," on the improved status of his profession in these latter days. As usual, my host was in a pleasantly disputatious mood: He began to hem and haw, and availing himself of a memory which is still prodigiously retentive, he reminded me that Garrick used to associate with Lord Chancellors, and other

grandeest, on a footing of perfect equality. This there was no denying, so I didn't attempt to deny it, but shifted my ground:—"Hasn't there, however, been a sort of general levelling-up, a marked improvement in the social position of the rank and file of the profession?" "Well," replied the old gentleman, "perhaps there has, but yet—" he paused. "Ah!" I exclaimed, "What is the 'monstrous malefactor' to be brought in by that 'but yet'?" He answered never a word; but rose, and, toddling to his book-case, took down a portly volume, and began to turn over the leaves. Then, with a merry twinkle in his grey eye, he handed me the volume, with a "Just read that!" I read in French, what I will here translate, as I don't approve of long quotations in a foreign tongue:—

"Charles Sanson, public headsman of Paris, met the painter David coming out of the Hall of the Revolutionary Tribunal, one morning in the spring of 1793. The painter had in his hand a roll of paper, which he unfolded and displayed to the headsman. 'Well, citizen Sanson,' quoth he, 'what think you of this Roman?' 'Capitally drawn,' replied Sanson, 'only you've made him look terribly ferocious.' 'Austere would be the better word. Don't you perceive that he is the avenger of the people?' 'The avenger! What may that mean?' 'Why, yourself and your colleagues, to be sure.' 'And is that the uniform you are going to make us wear?' 'Uniform, indeed! Say costume, you barbarian. But how do you like it?' 'Like it? not at all. You don't catch me running about like a bare-legged Highlander.' 'Highlander, quotha! Why, it's a pure antique Roman costume. I fear, citizen Sanson, you fail to comprehend the dignity of the functions you perform.' 'Ah! citizen David. Stop one moment! Don't overdo the *dignity*! Else I'm mighty afraid we shall have too many competitors in our profession.'"

Complaints are so frequent at this time of the year—and certainly not least amongst many fair members of the theatrical profession—of the discomfort and inconvenience arising from chapping and roughening of the skin, that we are constrained for once in a way to call the attention of our lady readers to a preparation that really, from testimony adduced, seems to meet all requirements in this respect. This preparation is known as "Lanoline" Soap, and, as manufactured by the eminent chemists, Burroughs, Wellcome, & Co., of Snow Hill Buildings, is found to be a pure neutral soap, evidently prepared from the best material, and remarkable in respect of its freedom from alkali, which is notably present in most toilet soaps to such a degree as to cause an unnatural dryness and roughness of the skin, and in winter to lead to chapping and abrasions. This is because the alkali abstracts from the skin the only natural fat upon which it depends for its nourishment as well as for its softness, clearness, and elasticity. The Lanoline Soap is not only excellent for cleansing the skin, but the Lanoline which it contains is set free in the water whilst washing, whence it is absorbed by the skin, for which it has a strong affinity. Lanoline, we understand, is the special name given to a purified fat of sheep's wool, and this being natural to the skin and hair, is readily absorbed by them, contributing in a marked degree to their nourishment and healthfulness. It differs from ordinary fats in that being a cholesterine and not a glycerine fat, it does not become rancid and develop acids which are injurious to the skin. It is undoubtedly well worthy of a trial by all persons who appreciate a healthful skin and clear complexion, but is specially useful to those who suffer from roughness, redness, premature wrinkles, and the chapping which is now so prevalent.

New plays produced and important revivals in London, from Jan. 18, 1890, to February 18, 1890.

(*Revivals are marked thus*°).

1890.

- Jan. 21 "Across Her Path," new play in four acts, written by Miss Annie Irish, founded on Miss Annie S. Swan's novel. *Matinée*. Terry's.
- „ 23 °"The Taming of the Shrew," a comedy by William Shakespeare. Globe.
- „ 25 °"Cyril's Success," comedy in five acts by H. J. Byron. Criterion.
- „ 27 "The Best Man Wins," fantastic American farce in one act by Mark Melford. Novelty.
- „ 27 °"Kleptomania," a farcical comedy, by Mark Melford. Novelty.
- „ 28 "All a Mistake," comedietta by Mrs. Newton Phillips: Ladbroke Hall.

- Jan. 31 "An Idyll of New Year's Eve," fairy sketch, by Rosina Filippi, music by Amy Elise Horrocks. Chelsea Town Hall.
- Feb. 1 "Dr. Bill," farcical comedy in three acts, adapted from the French of Albert Carré, by Hamilton Aïdé. Avenue.
- " 1 "Fool's Mate," original comedy in one act, by Frederick W. Broughton (placed in evening bill). Avenue.
- " 1 "The Tidal Hour," domestic drama in one act by Rex Watney. Victoria Hall, Bayswater.
- " 3 "A Noble Brother," comedy drama in four acts, by W. J. Summers. Opera Comique.
- " 3 "Our American Cousin," comedy by Tom Taylor. Novelty.
- " 4 "Gringoire," new version of Theodore de Banville's poetic play, by Miss E. Bessle and S. Herbert Basing. Park Town Hall, Battersea.
- " 6 "Clarissa," drama in four acts, founded by Robert Buchanan on Richardson's world-famous novel. *Matinée*. Vaudeville.
- " 8 "New Lamps for Old," a (comparatively speaking) new and original play in three acts, by Jerome K. Jerome. Terry's.
- " 8 "The Parting of the Ways," rustic comedy in one act, by Frederick Bowyer and W. Edwardes-Sprange. Terry's.
- " 11 "Our Boys," H. J. Byron's comedy. Criterion.
- " 14 "The Home Feud," original play in three acts by Walter Frith. *Matinée*. Comedy.
- " 14 "Isalda," new and original play in one act, by Fred Horner. Toole's.
- " 15 "My Brother's Sister (only in fun)," played in three acts (first time in London). *Matinée*. Gaiety.
- " 17 "Les Cloches de Corneville," comic opera in three acts, by H. B. Farnie and R. Planquette. Opera Comique.
- " 18 "Quicksands," comedy drama in four acts, by Charlotte E. Morland. *Matinée*. Comedy.
- " 18 "Tabitha's Courtship," comedietta, by Eva and Florence Bright. *Matinée*. Comedy.

In the Provinces from January 16, 1890, to February 18, 1890.

- Jan. 27 "Work and Wages," five-act drama by William Bourne. T.R., Hanley.
- " 27 "Noble Love," romantic drama in four acts, by C. A. Clarke and J. J. Hewson. T.R., Goole.
- " 27 "The Cloven Foot," play in four acts, founded on Miss Braddon's novel, by Frederick Mouillot. T.R., Blackburn.
- " 27 "The Scapegoat," original drama in four acts, by Woods Lawrence. T.R., Huddersfield.
- Feb. 3 "In Deadly Peril," drama in four acts, by Hal Collier. Aquarium, Scarborough.
- " 3 "His Future Wife," original one-act farce, by F. Hawley Francks. Brighton Aquarium.
- " 5 "In the Queen's Name," original drama in a prologue and three acts by Messrs. Trevor and Delille. T.R., Colchester.
- " 8 "Doomed," original three-act comedy drama, by A. H. and A. C. Hodgson. Philharmonic Hall, Southampton.
- " 8 "In Olden Days," comedietta, by A. H. and A. C. Hodgson. Philharmonic Hall, Southampton.
- " 10 "Sins of New York," drama in five acts, by Arthur Horner. T.R., Birkenhead.
- " 10 "Loaded with a Legacy," comedietta by W. C. Honeyman. Avenue, Sunderland.
- " 18 "Love's Magic," original operetta in one act, libretto by Major J. K. J. Jocelyn, music by Cavalier L. Zavertal. Royal Artillery, Woolwich.

In Paris from January 15, 1890, to February 11, 1890.

- Jan. 18 "Margot," comedy in three acts, by Henri Meilhac. Théâtre Français.

- Jan. 20 "Le Voyage de Suzette," spectacular piece in three acts and eleven scenes, by M.M. Chivet and Duru. Music by Léon Vasseur. Gaîté.
- .. 24 "Cendrillonette" operetta in four acts by Paul Ferrier, music by Gaston Serpette and Victor Roger. Bouffes.
- Feb. 4 "Ma Mie Rosette," three act comic opera, by Jules Prével and Armand Liorat. Music by Paul Lacome. Folies Dramatiques.
- .. 5 "Dimitri," lyrical drama in five acts, by Henri de Bornier and Armand Silvestre. Music by Victorin Joucières. Opera Comique.
- .. 7 "Le Comte D'Egmont," Göethe's drama in three acts, adapted by Adolphe Aderer. Beethoven's music. Odéon.
- .. 11 "Nos Jolies Fraudeuses," three act farcical comedy, by Alexandre Bisson. Nouveautés.



Reviews.

"*Scaramouch in Navies, and Other Plays*," by John Davidson. (London: T. Fisher Unwin.)

If any model is good to found one's literary style upon, by all means let Shakespeare offer, and assuredly Mr. Davidson thinks so too. On the three plays that constitute his volume, "Romeo and Juliet," "Much Ado About Nothing," "Cymbeline," "Henry the Fourth," "Love's Labour's Lost," "A Midsummer Night's Dream," and "A Winter's Tale," all exert a marked influence, and what originality the book possesses is not due to its plots, characters, or language. The blank verse, however, is not Shakespeare's blank verse. This and the rhymed lyrics are all Mr. Davidson's, even when he sets "time" against "brine" in a couplet. But, having said this, we have uttered our worst, and we may accord a fair meed of praise to the poetic fibre of his book. Its pages abound in felicitous lines and metaphors, such as :—

" . . . This grass-green, sea-green earth,
This emerald that sets off the golden sun.

" . . . This fair hanging garden, &c."

"I see thee, moon, in thy high heavenly garden;
Thou walkest like a maid among her flowers."

"Among the flags that, like a rushy curb
The streaming brook rein to an ambling pace."

"Even now I see our elfin nation come,
Descending like a shower of frosty snow."

And, speaking of a ring on a girl's finger :—

"Looks like the little golden coronal
Round which the petals of the lily cluster."

One who has a gift for such phrases as these, and who can command the courageous flow of language that Mr. Davidson is master of, need never despair of producing work that may make its mark in the future.

"*Humourous Poems of the Century*," Edited, with biographical notes, by Ralph H. Caine (London: Walter Scott.)

We have little but unstinted praise to accord to this latest addition to the "Canterbury Poets" series. As an anthology of humourous poems of the

century, the little volume is well worth the modest inch of space it would demand upon our bookshelf, for the selection is thoroughly judicious. We are sorry to see one or two old friends absent, notably, perhaps, C. S. Calverley. Exigencies of copyright are, without doubt, however, responsible for the omission.

"*Sylvie and Bruno*," by Lewis Carroll. (London: Macmillan and Co.)

In the preface to his latest book Mr. Carroll wails over the difficulty of being original. This he need not do, for he has made one odd line of humour peculiarly his own, and in it, if he has many imitators, he has no peers. The greater part of "*Sylvie and Bruno*" no one but its author could have written. Through its pages we are constantly called up halting with little spurts of laughter over such whimsical tricks of speech and fancy as became a type of household jest near twenty-five years ago. Think of that, my good men! A quarter of a century, with its revelations and revolutions in literature, has passed over our whitening heads since Alice, and the Duchess, and the little crowd of card-courtiers stepped into print and our most close affections simultaneously. And we see by the publishers' list that the nursery is still faithful to a favourite that has become traditional, and that Alice has entered upon her eight-hundred-and-third century, and is, we have no doubt, hale and hearty yet. But the little lady's huge popularity is her father's worst confusion, for how may he devise a rival to her daintiness that may hope to compare with the quaint child of his younger fancy? *Sylvie, Bruno and Co.* are charming little creations, but they lack the utter sweetness of inconsequence that characterized their progenitors. And then we resent being treated to moral disquisitions in fairy tales, even when Alice's parent is the preacher. Sincerity, charity, piety—what excellent qualities are these, yet how out of place if made obtrusively prominent in a story of nonsense! And what do we want with Lady Muriel and the sick cast of an unhappy love-tale in Carroll-land? What do we want—Oh, beloved jester, that you should commit that grievous error of taking the public into your confidence as to the creations of your brain! An author, as reviewed through his works, should ever be a mystery, an unknown quantity, a *Junius in nuce*—

"For a ticket, apply to the Publisher."

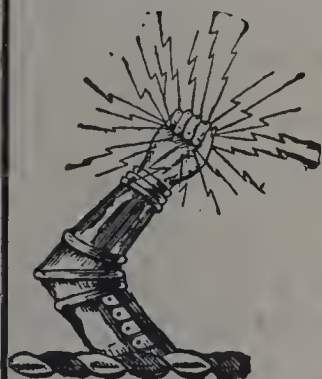
No: thanking the public, I must decline.

A peep through my window if folks prefer:

But please you, no foot over threshold of mine."

Think of Poe and his "*Philosophy of Composition*," and weep. But if there is a mistake or two apparent in this new volume of yours, there is yet more that makes us shake hands again with the ghost of thine old self over that quarter century of years. Hail the gardener, and the Chancellor, and the Professor most of any! And, if the declining sun at the *finis* of the book is meant to typify the laying down for good and all of thine own eventful pen, we should like to press amongst the childish world that crowd about the doors of thy fancy, to cry a last heartfelt farewell to one who has enriched our baby literature with dowry of more pure, harmless, and delicious fun than ever were its gain before. But one word as to the illustrations. Handicapped by illustrious tradition, Mr. Furniss has yet succeeded in imbuing his little personalities with a grace and charm that are all their own; and, indeed, one or two of his vignettes are quite models of exquisite prettiness.





ALL WHO SUFFER

FROM

Rheumatism, Gout, Kidney Diseases, Impaired Vitality,
Sciatica, Lumbago, Internal Weakness, Local and
General Debility, Torpid Liver, Indigestion, Nervous
Exhaustion, Brain Fag, Melancholia, Organic
Disorders, Sleeplessness, Nervous Dyspepsia,
OR ANY FORM OF

NERVOUS, MUSCULAR OR ORGANIC WEAKNESS

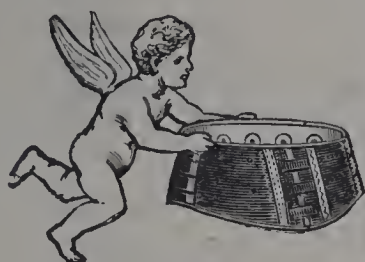
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Farquhar, Mr. Gilbert.....	May, 1888	*Patti, Madame Adelina.....	June, 1882
Farren, Miss Nellie, and Mr. Fred Leslie.....	Jan., 1890	Penley, Mr. W. S.....	February, 1885
Featherston, Miss Vane.....	October, 1889	Phillips, Miss Kate.....	May, 1885
Fenton, Miss Angela.....	June, 1887	Reeves, Mr. Sims.....	January, 1888
Fernandez, James.....	October, 1883	Rehan, Miss Ada.....	September, 1889
Forsyth, Miss Helen.....	June, 1886	Richards, Miss Cicely.....	August, 1889
Giddens, Mr. George.....	July, 1889	"Road to Ruin" Group.....	October, 1886
Gilbert, Mrs.....	August, 1886	Roberts, Mr. Arthur.....	October, 1888
Gilbert, W. S.....	April, 1883	Robertson, J. Forbes.....	May, 1883
Grahame, Miss Cissy.....	September, 1882—July, 1886	Robertson, Mr. Jack.....	June, 1889
Grossmith, Mr. George.....	June, 1885	Roe, Mr. Bassett.....	September, 1889
Graves, Miss Clo.....	May, 1888	Rorke, Miss Kate.....	August, 1883
Gwynne, Miss Julia.....	July, 1884	Rorke, Miss Kate, as Sophia.....	February, 1887
Hare, John.....	September, 1883	Rorke, Miss Mary.....	September, 1884—March, 1886
Harris, Mr. Augustus.....	June, 1886	*Roselle, Miss Amy.....	March, 1884—March, 1887
Hawthorne, Miss Grace.....	January, 1888	*Roze, Miss Marie.....	August, 1881
Hill, Mr. W. J.....	February, 1885	"Run of Luck" Group.....	November, 1886
Holme, Miss Myra.....	December, 1884	Santley, Miss Kate.....	December, 1888

[Continued on page x

WHITENS THE TEETH, PREVENTS DECAY

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REJECT IMITATIONS.

THE THEATRE.



At the Old Globe Playhouse.

BY WILLIAM HENRY HUDSON.

"Yes, faith, if it please you, let's go see a play at the Globe."—*Green's Tu Quoque.*



THESE are the days of costly and elaborate revivals. When a play of Shakspeare is put upon the stage; money is lavished with a free hand on scenery and costumes; loving attention is bestowed on the smallest accessories; and archæology and history are alike laid under contribution to insure the absolute accuracy of even the minutest details. All the powers of the scenic artist and the stage carpenter are brought into requisition; managers vie with each other in the splendour and completeness of their preparations; and, in a word, everything is done that can be done to make the performance worthy of the mighty master's name and fame.

Now, whether or not the prominence which is thus given to the merely external and material part of dramatic representations is altogether a healthy sign, is a question which, although fairly open to discussion, need not detain us here. But be the answer what it may, our present managerial policy may well, from sheer force of contrast, lead us to ponder a little upon the strangely different circumstances under which our great dramatist's works were first presented to public attention. Most of us must occasionally have realized the curious sensation which accompanies any attempt to carry the mind back from the festival-rendering of the *Messiah* at the Crystal Palace, to the first performance of the same wonderful work under Handel's own conductorship in 1741. In the same way it is almost pathetic to turn from the Lyceum stage of to-day to that other stage in the Old Globe Playhouse, which, three hundred years ago, witnessed the first performances of those masterpieces of humour and passion which will remain the wonder of all the generations so long as the English tongue endures.

Bearing all the details of the latest Shakspearean revival in our memories, let us try for a few minutes to realise the startling con-

trast which is thus presented to our minds. Many of us, ever too ready as we are to accept things as we find them, and to forget the slow and painful course of development by which they have come to be what they are, may discover matter for some little astonishment in the state of things brought to light by the answer to our simple question, How were Shakspeare's plays performed, under Shakspeare's own management, and by his own men?

We will go back, then, in imagination to the London of three centuries ago. Good Queen Bess is dead and buried, and her successor, his "sacred Majesty," King James I, now wears the crown in her stead. If we look about us keenly and try to get a little beneath the surface of existence, we find that things are not altogether in a satisfactory condition. Raleigh has been banished to the Spanish Main for the part which he took in the ill-starred endeavours to set Arabella Stuart upon the English throne; in silence and mystery the Gunpowder Plot is brewing; a thousand distracting influences are at work; and the minds and tongues of all the more thoughtful men and women of the metropolis are busy now, and are daily growing busier, with those great social and religious questions which are destined ere long to pass from a theoretical into a very practical and very dangerous form. But we will not allow such matters to disturb us here. We are intent upon a few hours' relaxation and enjoyment; and so, without more ado, we fall into rank with the numerous pedestrians who are making their way along the river-side in the direction of the great pleasure-resort during the summer months—the old Globe Playhouse.

It is half-past two on a bright August afternoon, so that we shall be in good time for the performance, which is to commence punctually at three. Late hours and long nights of dissipation are unknown in these more primitive days, and stage representations take place by the simple light of day. As we pursue our way we find it easy to understand how needful it is that this should be so. The streets are in a dreadful condition, abounding in crevices and mud-holes; and since they are not lighted at night-time save by the dim lanthorns which good citizens are supposed to hang out before their doors, walking after dark would prove, even from this point of view, a rather dangerous exercise. The rich folks, it is true, hire link-boys to accompany them; but the poorer, among whom I suppose we must reckon ourselves, would have a hard time of it to pick their way homeward when darkness had fallen over the city. Worse than all, however, is the fact that all the roads hereabouts are famous for brawls and robberies; and it behoves all quiet and law-abiding citizens to reach their dwellings with the dusk if they respect their heads, and do not wish to come into unpleasant collision with night-prowlers on the one hand, or the watchmen on the other.

Here, then, we are at the Globe Playhouse—a circular, or more correctly speaking, hexagonal structure, built entirely of wood. Painted upon the wall is the sign and token of the establishment—a figure of Hercules bearing a globe; and above is a pole from which, by-and-by

when the play has commenced, a flag will be seen fluttering in the light summer breeze, that all the world around may be made aware of what is going on within. On the wall, too, we find a play-bill giving due information concerning the coming performance. Notice that it is printed in red. That means that the piece to be represented is a tragedy. Closer study of the bill shows us that this supposition is correct. The play is to be *Hamlet*, by Mr. William Shakspeare—a man of some reputation now-a-days, who, in partnership with Richard Burbage, is the lessee and manager of the house.

The building has two entrances ; but one is a stage door reserved for the actors, and so we must pass in at the other. Just inside the doorway we have to pay down our coin. Not being burdened either with much pride or with heavy purses, we must, I suppose, be contented with a place in the “yard” or pit, and even this costs us sixpence a piece—but then, you see, the Globe is a house of reputation and high-standing, and can well afford to put the prices up a little. If you want a penny or a twopenny place, well, you must go elsewhere to get it—to the “Fortune” or the “Red Bull,” for example. Sixpence is the lowest price, here ; while for a box, or “room” as we call it, you will have to give at least a shilling, and sometimes more.

So we walk into the theatre, and take up our positions in the “yard.” It is well that it is a fine afternoon, for, see ! over our heads is the blue, cloudless sky. A small part of the house—namely, the stage itself, and the private rooms at the side—is thatched over ; but all the rest is open to the day.

It is to be hoped that you do not feel tired after your long walk, for there are no seats in the pit, and you will have to stand as well as you can during the two hours or so of the performance, unless you have been far-sighted enough to bring a stool with you, as you see some of our friends have done. Of course it is rather wearying, but you must make the best of it. These are not the days of luxury ; and people have not yet begun to devote the time and attention which they will presently give, to the problem of how to make themselves comfortable.

We are none too soon after all, for the house is already full. Evidently Mr. William Shakspeare’s play is a “draw” ; and besides this, you must remember, Richard Burbage, the great Richard Burbage, is going to perform. He is always an attraction. There are some minutes yet before the rising, or more properly speaking, the drawing, of the curtain. Let us amuse ourselves in the meantime by taking stock of the house.

A single glance is sufficient to show us how wide and deep and genuine is the interest taken in the drama. Every class is represented among the spectators, and it is evident enough that they have all come to enjoy themselves. If you look carefully into the private “rooms,” you will see many a face and figure familiar in the court and public life of the day—members of the peerage, great thinkers and writers, and men who, for the time being at any rate, occupy a high and responsible place in the counsels of the nation. The other

parts of the house will furnish us with examples of almost every phase of contemporary English life. There is the wealthy merchant, well-fed and self-satisfied; the successful adventurer, with his "lean and hungry countenance;" the struggling author; the quiet-going, hard-working citizen; the rollicking 'prentice; the low-type artizan; the doubtful nondescript "everything by turns and nothing long." But what strikes us most, perhaps, is the fact that by far the larger portion of the audience—of the more respectable portion especially—consists of members of the male sex. There are plenty of women of a certain class, whose flaunting finery is somewhat too eloquent of their character; some ladies of the court, too, are present, and a few of the burghers and tradesmen are accompanied by their wives and daughters. But still the ladies are in a minority, and, leaving out of count the somewhat doubtful personages just referred to, in a very distinct minority. It has not yet been quite satisfactorily settled whether women of fair fame and respectable life may frequent the theatre with impunity. Some go, but some stay away; and for the moment each must act according to the dictates of her own conscience, or, which is perhaps more likely, according to the commands of her husband or father. Those present, you may observe, protect their complexions by wearing silk masks.

Please notice also, as you cast your eye around the house, the orchestra in front of the stage. You will see that it consists of ten performers, and it is reckoned the strongest in London. The other theatres can only muster six or eight.

Hollo! what's all this hubbub about? Something must have happened while we have been busy criticising the company. Yes, it's a young thief, caught in the act with his deft fingers in a pocket not his own. Well, it will only create a temporary excitement; for such an occurrence as this is not by any means rare, and we know well enough what to do with the offender. There he goes! hurried along, in spite of all his struggles, by a vigorous and indignant crowd. Yonder, just in the corner, on one side of the stage and by the railings which separate it from the auditorium, you can see a small post or pillory. There the young thief will be made secure; and thus held up to public obloquy during the whole course of the performance, he will have ample leisure there to wish that he had been less daring or more careful.

But I hope you will not fail to notice that, apart from such an occasional interruption as this, the people about us are as a whole orderly and well behaved. They have long since found their own means of passing away the *mauvais quart d'heure* during which they have to wait for the beginning of the entertainment. Some are eating apples, some cracking nuts, some playing cards, some enjoying their mugs of beer. Everywhere there is plenty of tobacco being smoked, and gibes and jests go round, which, if sometimes rather broad and outspoken, serve to keep us all amused and in good temper till the long-expected hour draws nigh.

So it is three o'clock at last. Once, twice, thrice, the trumpet

sounds ; the curtain divides in the middle, and is drawn apart to the two sides of the proscenium. Here, then, is the stage, rush-strewn as usual, and hung with black, as is always the case when a tragedy is given.

And who are these fashionably dressed young men, with curled moustaches and doublet and hose of the very newest cut, who, some seated on three-legged stools and some reclining full length on the rushes, are, as the curtain is drawn aside, displayed to the full gaze of the house ? You may well ask the question. They are not performers ; they are a portion of the audience—indeed the most fashionable portion, the dandies and smart fellows of the day. Permission thus to take a seat upon the stage itself was granted to them in the private theatres ; and in spite of all the opposition of the groundlings, or “pittites,” whose view they obstruct and who do not forget to express their feelings by loud hisses whenever one of their caste appears, they have assumed the same privilege in regard to the public theatres also. In addition to the price of admission, they have to pay sixpence or a shilling for their stool, and I suppose they imagine that this gives them a right to do as they like. At any rate you will find that they cause plenty of annoyance as the play goes forward, by talking and laughing loudly among themselves, jesting with the ladies in the private “rooms” at the side of the proscenium, and otherwise behaving in unseemly ways.

Here comes the Speaker of the Prologue, dressed in his grave suit of black, and nearly stumbling over the outstretched legs of the gallants on the stage. His is rather a thankless task, for no one seems to care much what he is saying, and everybody is telling everybody else to “hush.” At length he retires, leaving most of us about as wise as we were before ; and now the play can begin in earnest.

The Globe Company is a good one, and all the parts are well filled. But the great attraction is Burbage, England’s Roscius as he is called, who fills the title-rôle. Does it surprise you somewhat to find that this great actor is short and stout ? Well, they do say that as Will Shakspeare wrote the part of Hamlet expressly for him, it was to make the character fit in every way that, to the astonishment of many, the Danish Prince is described as “fat and scant of breath.” But as the play continues we forget all his physical peculiarities and disadvantages, absorbed altogether in his magnificent acting.

One thing will cause you some surprise—there is not a woman upon the stage. Gertrude, the Queen, the sweet Ophelia, and all the female attendants, are played by youths or boys. Do you not see that the Queen’s chin is blue from a recent application of the razor ? Do you not hear how ever and anon Ophelia’s voice will tremble for a moment between a shrill treble and a sepulchral bass ? There are no actresses as yet on the English boards ; and Shakspeare himself will die only guessing, perhaps, what Ophelia, or Desdemona, or Juliet, or Rosalind, or Isabella, or Imogen, might become in the person of a real woman.

And even more surprised, perhaps, you will be to observe that

the mimic world upon which we gaze is absolutely devoid of scenery. You notice how the stage, considerably narrower than the building itself, projects into the yard, and is surrounded on three sides by spectators. Such an arrangement as this could, of course, only be possible at a time when scenery is undreamed of, and when there is no question of perspective. All the attention is now concentrated wholly and entirely upon the actors, and we have to rely upon the many passages of beautiful poetic description, which abound in consequence, to conjure up in our imaginations the changing scenes amidst which the action passes, but which are altogether unrepresented upon the stage. Now we are on the platform outside the Castle at Elsinore in the chilly silence of midnight ; now in a room of state, with its splendid furniture and appurtenances ; now in the house of Polonius ; now in the graveyard ; now upon the battle-field ; and still, through all and amidst all, we have nothing before our bodily eyes but the small, rough, unpicturesque stage, rush-strewn, and draped with its sombre black. All the surroundings, all the background and accessories for the great drama, are "in the mind's eye, Horatio." We are not like children, here, amused with stage tricks. We ask for no gorgeous scenery ; no magnificent trappings ; no sunlight, or moonlight, or realistic effects. We are men who have come to witness a great play, full to overflowing of passion and thought ; and we find enough, and more than enough, for our interest and attention in that warfare of emotion which is carried on before our enraptured gaze.

But though scenery is lacking, it is easy to see that the management has laid out a good deal of money upon its actors' costumes. All the principal personages have robes of gorgeous colour and very rich material—velvet, satin, and silk. The magnificence of personal adornment is a distinguishing characteristic of these performances, and the utmost importance is attached to it. It does not much matter whether the finery is exhibited with a very strict regard to the dramatic proprieties. What the people demand is colour, and managers are careful to do their utmost to meet the popular taste. To do this, they are ready to spend money to the very verge of prodigality. Indeed, the payments which they make in this direction are out of all proportion to those which figure in the other parts of their accounts, and more especially to those items which have reference to more intellectual matters. A manager will sometimes give more for a single gown for the heroine than for the whole five acts of the play in which she appears.

And now the play is over ; but the conclusion of the drama does not exactly mean the conclusion of the performance. You see the good people about us are still waiting in expectation ; something more is still to come. Yes, here is the clown, whose part it is to unbend our faculties a little, after the severe strain to which they have just been put, by a kind of comic solo, technically known as a jig. The ground-work of his entertainment is a species of rough rhyme, but there is plenty of gag and *extempore* action of a

sufficiently broad and extravagant description. However, it makes the people laugh, and shakes off to some extent the lingering gloom produced by the tragedy which they have just witnessed, and so its end is served. Nor does this quite close our entertainment, though what remains is now rather a matter of loyal duty than of actual pleasure. As the clown retires, all the performers who have taken part in the play come forward once more, and, forming a half-circle upon the stage, they fall on their knees before the spectators, and offer a kind of address or prayer for the safety and welfare of his most gracious majesty the King. I daresay you may remember the words put into the mouth of the Epilogue to the second part of Mr. William Shakspeare's *Henry IV*. "My tongue is weary; when my legs are too, I will bid you good-night, and so *kneel down before you*—but indeed to pray for the Queen." This remark refers to this very custom, which no one would ever think of omitting in any properly conducted house. And now that King James has been decently prayed for, the curtains are drawn once more across the stage, and the performance is brought to an end.

A regular stampede follows, everyone trying his utmost to get as soon as possible into the open air. A hundred voices, in the most excited of tones, are busy at once discussing the merits of the play and the "points" of the actors. Here and there little groups of three or four make their way to the nearest ale-house, to refresh themselves after the heat and excitement of the performance, and complete the afternoon's pleasure-making by a glass and a quiet gossip. A crowd of 'prentices break off towards the open fields singing and shouting in the exuberance of their youthful joy. But the more staid of the visitors take the nearest road homeward, some making to the river-side to get a boat, others content to walk. Among the latter are ourselves; and as we turn our faces in the direction of town, we take with us, I hope, something to think about and to remember from our afternoon's visit to Shakspeare's Theatre.



Cap and Bells.



HE Jester sang in the banquet-hall,
His wit obeyed no bridle ;
He railed at all, both great and small,
The rich, the poor, the idle.
And mirth at every merry joke
Rang out from floor to rafter ;
It mattered not whate'er he spoke,
They answered all with laughter !

Ha-ha, ho-ho !

It merrily, merrily swells ;
They've never a care who motley wear,
And don the cap and bells !

He preached a sermon true and wise,
They only thought he jested ;
They laughed, and with their streaming eyes
The witty quip attested.
Perchance his heart had felt despair,
But how were they to know it ?
They only saw the motley there,
They never read below it.

The years passed by : the Fool lay dead,
His laughter stilled for ever ;
"He was the King of all," they said,
"We shall find his equal never."
But hid away, they found one day
A jest that silent made them—
A glove—a flower—a tress of hair—
Upon his heart they laid them !

Ha-ha, ho-ho !

It merrily, merrily swells ;
They've never a care who motley wear,
And don the cap and bells !

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

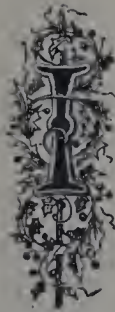


"Mal' Occhio."

(Continued.)

By FRANCES ALLSTON.

II.



T was late in September when Dolly went to pay her promised visit. She met with a more hospitable reception from the Brooke family than she had expected. Mrs. Brooke was politeness itself, and "the girls," as they were collectively called, seemed for a time to have buried the war-hatchet, and made themselves pleasant to their sister's friend. Hilda herself was looking brighter than she had looked for years. An expression of restful happiness had taken the place of the despondent hopelessness that her face had so often worn before.

Dolly was quick to detect the change, and with feminine intuition guessed the cause.

"Now then," she said, as she shut the bedroom door on the night of her arrival, "I have been longing all the evening for a quiet chat. Tell me, dear, when did you see Leonard Marston last?"

"On Friday."

"Well?"

"Well?"

"How about my bet, I want to know? He hasn't proposed yet, has he? But of course you would have told me. . . . I believe he *has* proposed. Tell me the truth at once. *Has* he?"

"I see it is no use trying to hide anything from you," said Hilda, flushing vividly. "A letter came this very afternoon."

"Asking you to marry him?"

"Yes."

"Hurrah! I have won my bet! Oh, I *am* glad, darling. I must give you a kiss. I hope you will be happy as the day is long. You deserve to. I said it would all come right, didn't I? And am I the *very first* person you have told?"

"Yes, you are indeed. The fact is, I am dreading telling my mother and the girls. It will make so much bitter feeling. I can't quite explain even to you. Oh, Dolly! my life has been very trying in some ways. Such long years of worry and sickness at home, and anxiety, and dissension! But now, I *do* think the bright days are coming. I have so longed for some one to care for me, I used to think that music would be enough, but I have been disillusionised since I went in for the profession. I see now that I am not strong enough to stand alone."

"And you really are fond of Leonard, now?"

"He is my very life! I did not understand him before, or appreciate him, but now I just worship him. I could not *imagine* him doing anything mean. I could trust him implicitly. He is a man I could honestly promise to 'love, honour, and obey.' When I sing that song of Schumann's—the one you are so fond of—'Widmung,' I think of him. You know those lines, 'Thou hast upraised me with thy worth.' It is so with me; I have been a better woman since I have known him. And to feel that he loves me! Oh! it is *too* much happiness for me. Sometimes I am quite afraid!"

"You will write to him to-night, of course."

"Oh, yes."

"And of course he will call here to-morrow?"

"No. He had to go down with his father to the new country house they have just bought near Tunbridge Wells. He begged me to write to him there, and, on Monday, he will come here to see me."

"And then you will be obliged to let all your people know?"

"Yes—but until then I mean to keep my happiness to myself. It is wrong, perhaps, but I have the strongest wish for them not to know it. You must choose your gloves to-morrow, Dolly; you won your bet fairly."

Dolly's wedding was coming off in December, and the two girls started for a long day's shopping the next morning, reaching home tired and jaded, only just in time to dress for dinner. It was not a very cheerful family party. The haggard, soured, disappointed looks of the elder Misses Brooke; the pert, giggling, self-assertive manners of the younger ones; the hypocritical, semi-religious expression, that veiled obstinacy and spite, on Mrs. Brooke's withered face, did not form an attractive study to Dolly, who was glad to escape into the drawing-room. She had hoped she might have had a cosy *tête-à-tête* with her friend for an hour, but the whole family trooped in.

Hilda was busy with some work for a fancy bazaar. She took a seat beside a little table where a pretty shaded lamp stood.

"Now, Dolly, make yourself comfortable. How nice the fire looks! It is rather early to begin them, but it is really cold enough to-night. Is that the 'Globe' you are reading, Christine? What have you found so interesting in it?"

"Nothing," said Christine, curtly.

"But there *must* be something to fix you like that. Read it out, dear."

"No, I hate reading out loud. Besides, there is really nothing worth reading."

"But if it is one of those charming essays on the front page, I am sure it must be. I would give worlds to know who writes those 'turn-overs.' I generally cut them out and keep them. Peep over, Maudie, and see what she is reading."

A scramble ensued, in which the paper got torn, but Maudie triumphantly seized it, and began to read out in her shrill treble:

"The evil eye."

Hilda started violently and grew crimson.

For a moment the cruel thought that Dolly had betrayed her confidence, flashed across her mind.

"Give it me, Maudie," she said, in an altered voice.

"Wait. I haven't finished," said Maudie.

Dolly was looking almost as much startled as Hilda. She had guessed her friend's momentary suspicion, and repudiated it by a kind and sympathetic pressure of the hand.

"I'll tell you what it's about," said Maudie, presently. "If you want to be safe against the evil eye, you ought to wear a piece of red coral; that is an antidote. Why, Miss Lynn, you have got a piece on your chain!"

"My father brought it from Naples, years and years ago," said Dolly, hurriedly.

"Oh, then *you* are safe. Let's see if there is any news; the papers have been dull enough lately." After a moment's pause: "Oh! I *say*! what a dreadful thing!"

"What?" exclaimed six female voices, in different notes of excitement and anticipation.

"Shocking accident near Crowborough," the girl read out. "Oh, just fancy! Poor Leonard Marston was killed this morning—thrown from the dog-cart on to a heap of stones by the roadside—killed on the spot! Why, he only went down to their new country house on Friday with his father! Just fancy!"

"How dreadful!"

"How sudden!"

"What a shock for poor Mrs. Marston!"

"And his poor father, too!"

"Mrs. Marston will feel it most!"

"We must send round and enquire."

"Send Jane round at once."

"How shocking!"

"Such a fine-looking, handsome fellow!"

"Send Jane round *at once*," repeated Mrs. Brooke in her most imperative voice.

Amidst all this clatter of female tongues, Dolly was gazing with fascinated horror at Hilda.

She had never once looked up; she seemed frozen into a statue. Every tinge of colour had left her face. Her features were rigid in their fixed sternness and immobility, and wore a terrible look of despair and absolute surrender to destiny.

She never ceased working for a moment, and her hand was perfectly steady, as, with the regularity of a machine, she went on with her stitching.

With increasing fear, Dolly watched her. Some crisis must come; this dreadful rigidity *must* yield. She drew nearer, and standing before the unfortunate girl, shielded her from the unfriendly eyes that were beginning to look curiously at her.

She ventured presently to put her hand on her shoulder; Hilda

never stirred. She still went on working with the same automatic precision. The stitches were inserted as exactly as if every thought and interest were centred in the antimacassar.

Dolly could stand it no longer. Under cover of a fresh outburst of exclamations from "the girls," she whispered :

"I'm afraid you're ill, dear."

There was no answer.

"Hilda, will you come upstairs with me?"

There was not the least sign that she heard.

It was now half-past nine, and the servants came in for prayers. Mrs. Brooke opened the big Bible, and in her sanctimonious voice read the thirty-ninth Psalm.

Evidently Hilda, sitting there with her hands lying lifelessly in her lap, and her face fixed as stone, did not hear one word, or the strange appropriateness would have struck and roused her :

"I held my tongue and spake nothing ; I kept silence, yea, even from good words, but it was pain and grief to me. . . . I became dumb, and opened not my mouth, for it was Thy doing . . . Take Thy plague away from me,—I am even consumed by means of Thy heavy hand."

Dolly knew instinctively that the breaking of this frozen stupor would be terrible. She knew, too, that the last people to whom her poor friend could go for comfort, would be her mother and sisters, and that the preservation of her secret depended entirely on her self-control, till she could escape to her room.

With all the tact she was possessed of, she tried to draw the attention of the whole family to herself, and so well did she succeed, that none of them observed that Hilda had not spoken one word since the fatal news had been read out. Dolly asked Mrs. Brooke to excuse her if she went to bed early ; then she wound her arm affectionately round Hilda, and almost supported her up the stairs.

When they were alone at last, she thought the tension *must* give way, and that the relief of tears would come. But Hilda seemed absolutely indifferent to all her caresses and tender words.

"You must get to bed, Dolly," she said at last, in a voice so hoarse and changed that it was hardly recognisable. "Yes, dear, go to bed ; you can do nothing for me. I *must* be alone to-night. Go, now. I *must* be alone," and she almost pushed her from the room.

* * * * *

One evening, three years later, Hilda Brooke, now one of the finest contraltos of the day, was singing at St. James's Hall.

Dolly and her husband were in the audience. A French gentleman sitting near them, had been criticising, not very favourably, the artists who had previously sung : "These English singers, how inanimate ! how cold ! Voices ! yes, the voices are fine, but no soul, no sentiment, no *finesse*, no dramatic feeling. Hear one, you have heard all."

At that moment Hilda came on the platform. She sang Glück's "Che farò senza Euridice" as no other living artist can sing it, for she threw into it the sufferings of her own past, the agony of one night

in her own life. That terrible cry of the stricken Orpheus, "*Saziati, sorte rea! son disperato!*" was so real in its frenzy and despair, that the astonished French critic broke into an uncontrollable "Brava, brava! she *is* Orfeo, she is admirable, she is a *grand* artist. No one since Viardot has sung that air like that. She cannot be English, she has a soul! she is sublime!"

De Musset's lines, "*Puisque tu sais chanter, ami, tu sais pleurer,*" were familiar enough to him.

The woman before him had had the rare strength and courage to turn to art for consolation, and had found in it the divinest help and comfort. And if her path in life is, by her own choice, a lonely one, it has at least its glorious moments of musical inspiration to compensate for the sufferings of the past, and to make existence noble and satisfying.

(Concluded.)



A Provincial at the Play :

IN THE DAYS OF LONG AGO.

I.

January 6, 1842.



NOT been at Drury Lane Theatre till to-night since the autumn of 1837, when I saw Barnett's opera of "Fair Rosamond," one act (as the manner of Manager Bunn was) of "The Brigand" (James Wallack, of course), and the farce of "Turning the Tables," with Harley for the principal part. Within the same week I was taken to the Olympic, and, at the pit door, besieged by a paying throng, to evade their pressure was hoisted on to the stalwart shoulders of Mr. T——, for there was attraction to playgoers in "The Two Figaros," played by Liston and C. Mathews, and in "Riquet with the Tuft" which included Vestris at her best. Lapse of years has not made the portable child so much less portable as to be, even now, beyond Mr. T——'s portorage capacity. But it has made me a little less incompetent to relish a night at the play; for I remember that I fell asleep over "Fair Rosamond," whereas "King Arthur," which I am fresh from seeing, kept me wide awake. I am not going to say or believe that John Barnett's music could be sleep-compelling; but I am sure that Purcell's might, would, or ought to create a soul within the ribs of death. Will Purcell's day of appreciation ever dawn in this his native land? Perhaps the day-break is due—the hour come, and the man, Macready, to assure its advent, and to be associated with the renown of it accordingly. In

Purcell I take the genius of English music to be impersonated. He should have lived, and so should Dryden, to see and hear the justice done to both words and music to-night. The madrigal in the groves, that thing of beauty, is a joy for ever. The frost scene, entrusted to Stretton and Miss Romer, went admirably. That every joyous instinct within me responded to the festal summons, "Nymphs and shepherds come away!" as warbled by Mrs. Serle—that a languishing sense should come over me of voluptuous repose while listening to the duet, "Two daughters of this aged stream are we,"—that my pulses should beat quicker at the resonant "Britons, strike home!" and my heart bound and burn at the defiant "Come, if you dare!"—that I should be spell-bound "by the croaking of the toad"—that I should be fascinated by the charm of "Hither, hither, this way bend"—that my eyes should fill at the endearing strains of "Fairest Isle"—how could it be otherwise with such music and such musicians, for besides the three artists already named we had Henry Phillips as a *bass* relief; and for the histrionic and declamatory parts there were Anderson in King Arthur, G. Bennett in Duke Conon, Ryder in Merlin, and Graham as Oswald, King of Kent. Mrs. Stirling played Conon's daughter, Emmeline, but her time was to come later in "The Eton Boy," when she worried Keeley's fretting spirit all but out of his little body—the fun of the farce being materially strengthened by the aid of W. Bennett as a peppery colonel (Curry by name and nature), Hudson as a smart and tricksome captain, and Mrs. Selby (whose husband had played Aurelius in the opera) as the servant-of-all-work, Sally. The pantomime, "William Tell," was no doubt excellent, and comprised the services of Stilt and C. J. Smith and T. Matthews; but I scarcely care to jot down notes on pantomimes. My Twelfth Night has been happily spent in an entertainment of my own choosing—so that the alias of Shakspeare's "Twelfth Night" occurs to me—viz, "What You Will." May my next visit to town include a next night at the play equally pleasant to record and to recall.

* * * * *

September 3, 1846.

To the Adelphi Theatre, Edinburgh, attracted by the rare opportunity of seeing the veteran Charles Mackay, in two of his most popular parts—both of them due to Sir Walter—before his retirement from the stage. *Not* superfluous lags this veteran upon it. The veteran manager, too, that capital actor and estimable man, W. H. Murray, had his name in the bill, and supported his old friend's Peter Peebles in "Redgauntlet" by himself playing Joshua Geddes, and with perfect naturalness and placid decision he acted the worthy Quaker to the life. The finish of the setting made the diamond the reverse of a rough one. Murray and Mackay conjoined ought to be names to conjure with. Mackay—the original Bailie Nicol Jarvie, and himself, too, a native of Glasgow—must now be just about sixty years of age; and it is just within twenty since he figured prominently at that memorable dinner at which the Author of "Waverley" for-

mally dropped the mask, and renounced all future claim to be entitled the Great Unknown. That was early in 1827. Just eight years previously, Scott had been delighted with Mackay's version of his Bailie in "Rob Roy," as dramatised by their common friend Terry—afterwards partner with Yates in the management of the London Adelphi—a good part being found for Murray, or perhaps rather made by him, in Captain Thornton. The Dugald and Mattie, too, by Lockhart's account, were effectively acted, but that practised critic is careful to add that the great unrivalled success was the personification of the Bailie by Charles Mackay, who, as a Glasgow body, entered into the minutest peculiarities of the character with high gusto, and gave the west-country dialect in its most racy perfection. The run of "Rob Roy" at Edinburgh in 1819 extended to forty-one nights; and it was played once a week, at least, for many years afterwards,—Mackay always selecting it for his benefit. I should like to have seen him in this his topmost achievement, but it is something to have seen him in Peter Peebles,—seen him, and heard his ringing, clangorous, *sostenuto* shouting of Peter's name, as vociferated by the law court ushers, in summoning witnesses in the endless cause of Peebles v. Plainstones. Mackay's vehemently jubilant utterance of this prolonged note can only be described in the pregnant phrase of another of Scott's immortals, as pro-di-gi-ous!

To-night he supplemented his performance in "Redgauntlet" by one of an adaptation from the same great novelist's "St. Ronan's Well"—playing the canty, cranky, caustic Meg Dods, in a very sketchy, scratchy sort of piece, entitled "The Cleikum Inn," dealing only with the visit of Captain MacTurk to her hostelry, as the bearer of a challenge to her guest, Frank Tyrrell, and with the ignominious retreat that militant swaggerer is fain to accelerate when confronted too closely and too crushingly by so bellicose a dame. The feat of the impersonation was Mackay's skill in singing in *falsetto* of the most feminine order, "There cam a young man to my daddie's door." One could not but recall Nick Bottom the weaver and his pledge to roar you as gently as any sucking dove. It was a *tour de force* for the same man, on the same evening, so to "aggravate" his voice in the proclamation by name of Peter Peebles—a *fortissimo* with a vengeance—and so to subdue it to a *pianissimo* in the vocal exercise of Meg Dods.

Edmund Glover as Herries, F. Lloyd as Nanty Ewart, and the sisters Coveney, took part in the performance; but the two M.'s, Mackay and Murray, seemed each a bright particular star, and shone apart.

* * * * *

July 7, 1852.

Neither the Theatre Royal at Edinburgh, nor the Adelphi, knows William Murray as manager any more. If R. Wyndham by tact and energy is making both ends meet at the smaler house, that is more than can be said of F. Lloyd at the bigger, where "business" is deplorably bad, and rumour runs that collapse is inevitable and

imminent. I saw "Guy Mannering" there to-night; and Bishop's spirited overture, spiritedly played by an excellent band with a first-rate conductor, had for audience the sum total of three people in the pit, and if there were twice as many more in all the rest of the house, they were out of my sight.

Henry Bertram was impersonated by the young tenor, Henry Haigh, whose name, if he does himself justice, is likely to be better known, if not well known. He seems to be no more ambitious than other tenors to become an actor. But he has a voice, and can use it; and with cultivation and practice he ought, one of these days, to win literally golden opinions from all sorts of men, who pay their way to pit and boxes. Julia Mannering had a lively representative in Eliza Arden, but Lucy Bertram was insipidly underdone by Madame Victor. F. Lloyd, the manager, undertook Dirk Hatterick, and perhaps the depressing aspect of the house may account for a dull and depressing performance. Bruce Norton was more bluff and boisterous than humorous as Dandie Dinmont; the comedy of W. Cooper as Dominie Sampson was mild and inoffensive; the Colonel Mannering of that practised walking gentleman, Harcourt Bland, was correctly conventional; Miss Mortimer's Meg Merrilies was flat, thin and flavourless; and the best bit of acting was in the small part of Mistress MacCandlish by that admirable artist of standard renown in 'Auld Reekie,' Miss Nicol. She has, in her time, acted together with great actors, and before great critics, poets, philosophers and scientists; and ever with a happy blending of art and nature on her part, and with ready appreciation and welcome on theirs.

* * * * *

August 7, 1852

It is pleasant to hear how pleasantly people refer to Mr. and Mrs. Wyndham, now at the head of the Adelphi (Edinburgh), with a sense of unity, the two names naturally going together, and the one seeming to suggest the other. The "concatenation accordingly" is far from universal in theatrical, as in miscellaneous, married life. But there are parallel cases in such conjunctions, familiar in our mouths as household words—at least, if we are, playgoers or play-lovers—as Mr. and Mrs. Keeley, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kean, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Lacy, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Wigan. The Wyndhams are not much "in evidence" on the boards at present, and Mrs. Wyndham I have not yet had a chance of seeing. But her husband has recently appeared as Long Tom in "The Pilot," and hit off the jovial tar in a bright, breezy spirit, redolent of salt water and Tippy Cooke. And a night or two hence he is to give proof of his versatility by playing Charles Paragon in "Perfection," to the Kate of Miss Julia St. George. To-night, "The Stranger" has been the *pièce de résistance*,—Davenport and Fanny Vining representing the estranged couple. There is a fair working company to support them; Barry and Josephs (stage manager) for first and second old men—to-night playing respectively (and respectably) Solomon and Tobias; E. D. Lyons for *jeune premier*—the Francis in this sombre drama; C. Verner for melo-dramatic,





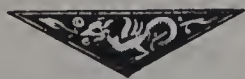
MADAME. SARA PALMA.

"I do but sing because I must,
And pipe but as the linnets sing."

—TENNYSON.

intense, and character parts, who to-night was content to subdue his predominance of voice and excitement in delivery, and to be sedate and sober as a judge in the person of Baron Steinberg ; a Miss Hill for secondary lady lots ; Miss Parker for arch and gamesome ones—and therefore with no *locus standi* in “The Stranger” ; a funny little fellow, by name H. Saker, for second places in broad or low comedy ; and for first, Henry Webb, a genuine comedian, whose humour is most natural, and whose good humour is quite infectious, for there is no help for it but following suit when he begins to laugh, so hearty and unaffected sounds his laughter, not a stage property, all make-believe and done to order, but healthily contagious and communicably enjoyable. He was cast for Peter, and showed how well he can play a fool without playing the fool. He has been seen to advantage lately, as the Yankee colonel in “The Pilot,” singing Yankee Doodle with gusto through his nose ; in burlesque parts *à la* Robson, from the supplies of Planché and Frank Talfourd ; as the kindly farmer in “Therese” ; and best of all, perhaps, as Gnatbrain in “Black-eyed Susan.” Davenport made a manly William in Jerrold’s sea-piece ; his rich voice, handsome presence and easy manner are gifts and graces above the ordinary ; and among other plays in which he has been starring here this summer with Miss Vining, are “Castilian Honour,” an American adaptation of Corneille’s “Cid ;” and that poetical play by G. H. Lewes, “The Noble Heart,” in which the author himself—of note as Biographical Historian of Philosophy, and Editor of “The Leader”—first acted the hero, as if to feel his way on a dramatic career, player as well as playwright. Davenport now takes Lewes’s part, after playing second to him, as the son—the latter now played by E. D. Lyons. Davenport is well-known and esteemed on the London stage, and was recently the mainstay in support of Macready during his farewell performances at the Haymarket. H. Webb is not so known, but equally well deserves to be.*

* The transcriber of these notes of a friend, from the rough, never intended for publication, may allow himself to append an occasional comment, explanatory or otherwise, in the form of a foot-note, and signed TR. For instance, in reference to Henry Webb, the addendum is permissible, that he drew attention and good audiences in London, some years later, by his performance together with his brother Charles of the two Dromios in the Comedy of Errors.—TR.



Mrs. Snudden's Burglar.



“BURGLARS! Yes, sir. I’m mortal afraid of ’em, which my sister Gusta were taken when a hinfant for houselinen by two of ’em, and her in a patent bassinet invented by Mr. Stringer, a friend of my father’s, but the trade refused it, it being easy to get the child in but hard to get it out without tongs or a rake, the blessed dear, but my father would have his joke, and Mr. Stringer in despair dropped his hat in the well trying to drown himself, and caught cold and died. Well was it for the darling baby that the ruffins heard it cry when half over the window sill and dropped it like a red-hot gooseberry skin, which there’s nothing more scorching in the mouth but foul words, and the less heard of them the better. Only the biggest let his iron jeremy fall on the little dear’s face and give her cold in the stomach which she have to this day and can’t abide the sight of water unlesss steaming—ugh, the brutes! with their crape marks which is widow’s weeds a’mourning for their crimes and skelitin keys to open any lock but the gate of Heaving. Not that I’m a chicking myself, though it were only a fortnight come Monday as young Mr. Tolput the draper’s assistant told me I wore well, which it were a blessing if his flannel petticuts did, and not rag at the seams like grass mats. But Lord save us! what are years to set against the artfulness and wickedness of murdering thieves as would go to the bottomless abbess for a dozen spoons and forks if not plated, and how they tell the difference crossing lawns on dark nights and throwing away the worthless without looking, beats me, sir, indeed it do.

“Yes, sir, I ‘cooks’ and I ‘parlours’ but mostly I ‘generals,’ which it requires a intellec’ above the hordinary to baste the jint and dust the furniture and make the beds in the twinkling of a camel’s eye, as the books says, and have ‘yes, mim,’ or ‘no, mim,’ sweetly on the tip of your tongue when the missus calls every five minutes ‘Cook, do this,’ or ‘Cook, remember that,’ or ‘Jane, I want you!’ but I know my place and that a soft tongue is never put out. Well, it is a hard life there’s no denyin’, but we can’t all have the fat with the mutton, and I don’t complain. Bread is a poor substitute for the stomach, but its better than a stone, and when I can’t keep body and soul together any longer a cheer and a footstool with the hangels is all I ask.

“But burglars is my bane, and thankful I shall be if I go to my grave and not come no nearer them than when I was maid to old Mr. and Mrs. Snudden as lived in the Mile-end Road and was equal to me in terror of the villins.

"It were supposed they had money, sir, having retired from a small tobacco business on 'Snudden's Mixture,' which it were a very high snuff, and the tales I've heard, there! I walked out then with a young man which to mention it would be unbecoming, he having wed Susan Porter with fifteen shillings for a ring borrowed from me and said for a church service, though little he should have had of it if I had known who's name he wished to fill into the blanks, and the warnings I had, he being double-faced with a birth-mark taking all one side, like the old gentlemen in ruffled shirt fronts and powdered ladies in picture-restorers' shops, which it's scandalous to offer to sell such rubbish with the paint not all laid on, but then Love is blind.

"Well, George he tell me that one day a tall gentleman come into Mr. Snudden's shop and he says, says he :

" 'Are you the villin what manufactures 'Snudden's Mixture?' "

" 'Yes,' says Mr. Snudden, a-stoppin' rubbin' his hands together when he see a customer.

" 'Well,' says the gentleman, 'my wife's been sneezin' for fourteen hours and she's sneezin' still on one pinch.'

" 'Indeed ! ' says Mr. Snudden.

" 'Yes, indeed,' says the gentleman, 'and I want a word with him as served her with that compound inflienza and convulsion powder.'

" Mr. Snudden he slided near the parlour door.

" 'He ain't at home,' he says very faint, for a thought struck him.

" 'She's a-sittin' now, says the gentleman, mighty fierce, 'with her feet in mustard and water and all the blankets in the house round her shoulders, and every time she sneezes a slate comes off of the roof and falls with a crash into my neighbour's back yard. It's awful,' he says, 'to see her knees draw up to her nose whenever one's preparing and shoot out with a snap like a eighty-one ton gun trigger when its let off. Show me the desolater that's filled my once peaceful home with a East India hurricane, and I'll mixture him ! ' and with that he makes a pounce and a jump at Mr. S. who dodged him and run through the parlour, out by the kitchen and into the washus, where the hired gal were mixin' something with her eyes a-waterin', and the gentleman after him.

" 'I'll mixture you,' he says, making a grab at Mr. Snudden, who seein' that he must take quick measures, kicks over the box the gal was workin' at, when such a dust rose as would choke the father of lies himself.

" 'Oh, lor ! ' says the gentleman, and he gives a jump and a tremendous howl and rushes out of the place. Well, it turned out that Snudden had got careless of his secret, and had handed over the mixin' of it to the gal, and she bein' a poor body mistook the curry powder tin for chicory, and upset the whole lot into the mixture.

" Mr. Snudden were ill for a fortnight afterwards, and when he recovered he sold the business, not finding his name good for what it was, and retired into private life, and it were then I came to wait upon them.

" They were a plump couple, sir, as ever I see, and that short in the

wind and legs they was like leaky bellers in their breathings ; but they was very close in everything, locking up to the coal bin itself, and very afeard of burglars. The missus she put a scuttle on the stairs every night, till she fell over it once going for the medicine bottle, and rolled down twenty-three steps with chunks flyin' around her into the 'all, where the dog set his teeth in her calf and she with haricot veins, and her screeches were 'arrowin'. After that they put 'alarms' to the shutters, and the puss started 'em a-climbing into the pantry winder, and Mr. Snudden he heard it, coming down in a white presperation and his night-shirt to see for hisself, which he was that blind with fright he chucked a cheer at ransom and broke a soup tureen and set the scullery one a-ringing, bringin' in an officer that mistook Mr. S. for a thief in his own 'ouse and give him one with his truncheon as he were a-stumbling that made the old man groan for a month after whenever he went to take a seat. He tried to get the law of the constable, but the magistrate he *nonseated* him as they say.

"But the greatest fright they had, sir, was one night when I had been with them goin' a year, and that I will tell you if so be you han't wearied of my talk, which perhaps you wishes to be off, and: indeed, I enjoys a quiet outing by myself sometimes, to benefit the scenery, Camberwell Green bein' bracin' to the system and the heyes. Howsumever, one mornin' I were clearin' away the breakfast things in the parlour and I hears them disputing.

"'It's undecent to put it off any longer,' says Mrs. S., 'you ought to go and you must go.'

"'Don't say 'must' to me, ma'am !' says he.

"'Why ?' she says, 'is you deaf.'

"'Deaf to orders,' says he, very sulky.

"'You wasn't that in the shop,' says she, and then she comes and sits on his knee, and there wasn't much room to spare though he were that fat in the legs you pitied the ready-made suit man and if to order all the same price.

"'James,' she says, 'be a dear and go, there's a love. Now Aunt Maria's come into the little property she'd maybe feel offended if you didn't call upon her, and she's over eighty, James.'

"'I shall have to be gone the night,' he says, gloomy-like, 'and you'll be afeared to death of burglars.'

"'We must make this little sacrifice,' she says, 'for kind heart's sake.'

"He gives her a kind of a squint out of one heye and broods a bit, and then he says :—

"'I'll tell you what, Susan,' he says, 'I'll go if you'll go on a visit for the night to your good god-father, for you haven't looked him up for an age.'

"'Oh, no,' says she.

"'Oh, yes,' says he, 'for that will make everything right and tight, and Jane here shall lock up very careful at dusk, all but the latch of the front door in case I should come 'ome with the milkman, and go to bed early.'

"Well, they mangled and wrangled over the business—lawk-a-mussy, sir, you never see such a fuss about nothing ! he wanting to precipitate* his aunt, and yet that selfish he couldn't abear the thought of leaving his fire and his little supper of toasted cheese and she the same—and at last they agreed to go and leave me in charge of the 'ouse. Well, they took theirselves off, and a hour afterwards the old lady she turned up again by herself.

" "I felt so odd, Jane," says she, "that I decided after all not to go after I had parted from your master."

" "To be sure, mum," I says, "it is 'ard to leave your little comforts at your time of life," which fetched her it did, she thinking herself quite a little menagerie in liveliness, and she bounced into the parlour and told me to get to my work ; ugh, the selfish old pelican as feeds on her own offspring's blood rather than have nothing to eat at all !

"Well, the day past, and when it come on dusk the missus began to get the fidgets and the trembles for fear someone might have seen Mr. S. depart, and be waitin' to break into the 'ouse.

" "Jane," she says fifty times, having me into the parlour for any or no reason. 'Do you think this is a dangerous neighbourhood, Jane ?'

" "The Lord helps them as helps themselves, mum," says I.

" "And that's jest what burglars do," says she, which I had no answer to give, bein' in a bit of a panic myself.

"At last it gets to be ten o'clock, and the missus she decides to go to bed. 'But don't go to sleep yourself, Jane,' she says, 'and if I pull the little bell that rings in your room, come down to me very quick.' Then she shuts herself into her room, first looking under both the beds, for she and the master they sleeps in separate ones, and I took my candle and went off to mine. The 'ouse seemed dreadful quiet, and every crack in the stairs or furniture sent my 'art into my mouth, like a pig with a lemon, but when I got warm between the blankets—and that no easy task in *my* bed, sir—I somehow lost sight of my fears, and dozed off, and must have fell asleep, when I was awoke by hearin' the bell over my head give a little jerk and tinkle. At that I jumped up wide awake on the instant, and sat shuddering and gaping into the darkness. Then sudden the bell give another soft jerk, and I stepped out on to the floor with my sides thumpin' and opened the door. There were nothin' to be seen or heard, and I were fancying myself dreamin' when the bell rung a third time, and not waitin' for more I stole downstairs pantin' and slid into the missus's room.

" "Where is you, mum ?' I says in a whisper, feelin' to my 'orror the sheets empty.

" "Here," she whispers back, 'under the bed.'

" "What is it ?' I says.

" "Burglars !' she sobs, and at the word I didn't wait for no more, but dived under the bed, too, and she clutched me.

*Probably "propitiate."

“‘Oh!’ she says, ‘we’re lost women. I ’eard ’im in the ’all. Don’t leave me, Jane.’

“‘Hush!’ I says, he’s a-comin’ upstairs;’ and sure enough there were a sound at that moment as if someone were a’creakin up, feelin’ his way by the banisters in the dark.

“‘I shall faint,’ she says.

“‘Hold up, mum,’ said I; ‘it’s our only chance. Shall I cough?’

“‘No, no!’ she says, ‘he would murder us in our innocence. Dead men tell no tales. Let him suppose the ’ouse is empty.’

“Then she give me a dreadful pinch, which I had to hold my breath for fear of screamin’, for we hear him come very soft into the room.

“He paused inside the door, and then he felt round a bit and tiptoed to the master’s bed, and we heard him shuffling quiet as if he were a’taking off the clothes. The missus she shook so that her night-cap slid over her heyes, and she sat a’glaring through the lace border.

“‘He thinks the cash box is hid there,’ she whispered in my ear; ‘oh, I shall die, Jane!’

“The shuffling went on for about ten minutes, and then the burglar he seem to climb on to the bed and sit down to think, and at that moment the missus she gave a little gasp, and I clapt my hand over her mouth. But judge of our ’orror when at the sound we hear the ruffin move herect, a’breathing hard, and instant he slip off on to the floor, and crawl under the other bed and there we all three was.

“‘Oh, Jane!’ says the missus, and ‘Oh, Jane!’ she says again, and then she holds me as if she were a-falling to pieces. ‘Slip out, Jane, in the Lord’s name, and run for a officer. He’s heard us and got under the bed, and our last hour has come, but I’ll scream if he moves. Oh, Lord’s sake be quick, Jane!’

Well, sir, I let her go and crawled out in a awful fright you may be sure. The burglar he never stir, and I pushed open the door very quiet, and went down the stairs as if a mad cat were at my ankles, and I felt for the latch of the front door and opened it, and a’most fell into the arms of a constable, I did, and me in my night-dress.

“‘‘Ullo!’ he says, ‘ere’s the sleepin’ beauty got a nightmare.’

“‘Oh, policeman,’ says I, pantin’, ‘such doin’s!’

“‘What’s hup?’ says he, ‘ave you set the ’ouse a-fire with them sparkling heyes?’

“‘Nonsense!’ says I, ‘there’s a burglar under the master’s bed.’

“‘I’m your man,’ says he, and he comes in and shuts the door, and we goes upstairs together, where he lights the gas from his lantern.

“‘Ere’ he says, ‘come out o’ that!’ and he catches ’old of the missus’s leg which were a’sticking hout and tugs at it. She give a awful screech, and come forth of her own accord, and sat on the floor a’nodding of her ’ead.

“‘Why,’ says he, ‘it’s a old woman!’

"‘I’m only forty-five,’ she screams; ‘look under the other, you fool!’

"But at the sound of her voice the valance of the bed opposite begun to move.

"‘Ah, his comin’ hout!’ she screeches, and the constable makes a pounce to ‘elp him.

"‘Hullo!’ says he, ‘he’s in his night-shirt, too.’

"The words was hardly out of his mouth, sir, when I snatched up the missus’s flannel petticoat, and had it round me in a twinkling. Then I looked for the ruffin, and—sir, you might ha’ knocked me down with a banister-brush when I see standing before me with a patch of dust on his cheek, and another on his nose, the MASTER! Yes, there he stood in his night-shirt, and looking that ashamed of hisself you’d ha’ thought him a schoolboy as had just had the caine.

"We all stood a’starin’ for a minute; then ‘James!’ cries the missus, with her mouth open.

"‘Susan!’ says he with a dog’s-eared look.

"‘Was that you under the bed?’ says she.

"‘Yes, my dear,’ says he very meek.

"‘What’s brought you home again?’ she says.

"‘Aunt Maria wouldn’t have me at no price,’ says he. ‘What’s brought *you* home?’

"‘I never went,’ she says, ‘and I thought you was a burglar.’

"‘So I did you, my dear,’ says he, ‘when I hear you under the bed. You needn’t stop, policeman.’

"‘Stop!’ says she, ‘no, I should think not, and he needn’t never have came if it hadn’t been for your consequential foolery;’ and with that she jest scrambles hup and pushes him agin the wash-stand, and hammers of him with the ‘eel of her boot, and no sating slipper, till he roared like a red rag to a tornader.

"Laugh, sir! I never see anyone laugh like that policeman. He shut the slide of his lantern and walked downstairs jest bustin’ his sides, and we hear him explodin’ through the ‘all, out through the door, and right down the street. Then I went to bed, and were kep’ awake half the night hearin’ them two ballyraggin’ one another.

"Well, sir; good-day, sir, and thank you kindly."



Our Horse.

BY R. S. HICHENS.

(*For recitation*).



Y family wanted to have one,
 "The stable stood empty," they said;
 "The stable!" I called it an outhouse,
 A ricketty broken-down shed.
 I'd never been used to keep horses,
 For I was bred up in a town,
 And so, when the question was mooted,
 I tried to say "No" with a frown.
 "My dears"—to my children appealing—
 "You're happy enough as you are;
 Now, Hilda, my love, what's the matter?"
 "I want to learn driving, Papa."
 "What nonsense! there's really no pleasure,
 In pulling a poor horse's mouth,
 And making him trot to the northward,
 When he wants to trot to the south."
 In vain all my arguments telling,
 In vain all my reasonings mild;
 You might as well try to rule nations,
 As try to say "No" to a child.
 At last, then, the question was settled;
 For many a week from that day
 I interviewed horses and dealers,
 And studied the prices of hay.
 The garden, the paddock, the stable,
 Seemed haunted from morning till night,
 By bow-legged and bottle-nosed rascals,
 Whose clothes were remarkably tight;
 Whose faces were red for the most part,
 Whose language was slangy and terse;
 And who, when no bargain was come to,
 Departed—well, wishing me worse.
 From morning till night rose an uproar
 Of feet trotting fast to my door,
 Big horses, small ponies, e'en donkeys,
 They came and they went by the score.
 At last on a steed I decided,
 A muscular, Roman-nosed nag,

Who'd once, the man said, won the Derby—
I fancy that man was a wag.
I paid about treble her value,
I hired as groom a young lad,
I bought a light cart ; on my honour
I think that I must have been mad.
The dealer departed on Wednesday,
And left us alone with the horse,
We tied her up tight in the outhouse,
We thought that would be the best course.
That night, as I find on referring,
To make the thing sure, to my notes,
She ate, the groom said—I believed him—
No less than two bushels of oats.
And yet she seemed hungry, for later
The boy came in white with alarm,
And said, when he went in to groom her,
She made a great bite at his arm.
“O, sir, why I dusn't go near her,
She rolls up the whites of her eyes ;
O crikey, if she aint a bad 'un !”
I smiled, and I tried to look wise.
“What rubbish. Come, get out the carriage,
I'll harness her,” bravely I said ;
The child ren came running to see it,
My wife and the nurse at their head.
I entered the stable, and boldly
I led out the nag to the door,
I fastened her into the carriage,
And harnessed her—hind side before.
At last, after terrible efforts,
I changed it, and got it all right,
I called for the whip, and I handed
The children in wild with delight.
“Now, John,” to the groom, “take her gently,
And lead her out into the road ;
Gee up—she won't move—what's the matter ?”
“She can't when she's got such a load.”
“Then Jane must get out and the baby,”
Jane shrieked, and the baby turned black ;
The nurse, looking wrathful, exclaiming,
“The darling, he'll have an attack !”
“Then let him, he weighs down the carriage,
And Jane is both heavy and fat.”
“Gee up ! good old girl ! what's she doing ?
Should horses run backwards like that ?
Good gracious, she'll smash up the greenhouse,
John, catch at her head, do you hear ?
Ah ! there goes the glass ! where's the whip now ?
I'll whip her, and teach her to fear.”

I grasped it, I raised it, I used it,
A bound and a shriek and a crash !
We lost the right step as she bolted,
And made for the road with a dash.
Poor Hilda fell out, and nose downwards—
The darling was sitting behind ;
No time to turn back, for the chesnut
Was off down the road like the wind.
On, on past the “ pub ” at the corner,
On, on, past the church and the school ;
I called to an infant to stop us,
He gazed, and he gaped like a fool.
On, on, past the rectory garden,
The rector was there at the gate,
He cried, “ Stop a bit ! ” “ Stop ! ” I muttered,
“ Just go and tell Time he’s to wait.”
The carriage reeled this way and that way,
The children fell down on the floor,
And Martha and Jack, from a whimper,
Increased to a shriek and a roar.
I stood up and tugged at the creature,
I called in a voice of command,
“ Give over, you brute ! ” she went faster,
I held the reins one in each hand.
And now in the distance before us
A strange-looking speck I espied ;
What was it ? A man or—good gracious !
“ The steam-roller ! ” loudly I cried.
“ We’re lost ! No ! ” I tugged at the right rein,
The mare with a swerve I turned back ;
“ Saved ! saved ! ” then I heard Martha screaming,
“ Papa, O papa, where is Jack ? ”
“ Thrown out in the hedge, I can’t help it,
He’s safer, my darling, than we ;
Ah ! there is the rector ”—we pass him—
He shouts, “ Won’t you come in to tea ? ”
“ To tea ! the man’s mad as a hatter !
Here, Martha, catch hold of this rein ;
Pull, pull for your life ; for your life, child,
We’re reaching the school-house again.”
And there were the children all playing,
They stared at us first in surprise ;
Then ran from our wheels with a bellow—
We passed like an arrow that flies.
And now we were nearing the stable,
Yet on went that brute of a mare ;
The man said she’d once won the Derby—
I daresay, with five miles to spare.
The door of the stable stands open,
She’ll pass—no she won’t—with a swerve

She turns in ; while I and poor Martha
Turn out, each describing a curve.
The first thing I heard when, half dizzy,
I found that I still was alive,
Was Hilda, who, rubbing her nose, said,
“Papa ! why how badly you drive.”
How badly ! But there, I won’t argue,
The whole thing was my fault, of course ;
I’ll only say this ; the next morning
I sold—to a knacker—our horse.



A Noble Sacrifice.

BY PERCY NOTCUTT.



SOME years ago I was doing a round of provincial pantomines, and at a certain town in ——shire, I arrived about 5 o’clock, on a cold January day. After dining at an hotel I proceeded to the Theatre Royal, and there witnessed the ever welcome pantomime of “Cinderella.” Shortly before the harlequinade, according to my usual custom, I proceeded behind the scenes to have a chat with the various artists engaged. The Ball-room scene was then in progress, and as an extra attraction, some circus performers had been engaged, and these artists were then giving an exhibition on the horizontal bar. Walking round the wings I suddenly came across a little figure leaning against the framework, with one of the most beautiful faces I have ever beheld. The child, for so he appeared, though I learnt afterwards he was nearly seventeen, presented one of the saddest spectacles it is possible to conceive, for though beautiful as a greek God in the face, his body was as small as that of a child of seven, and in addition frightfully shrunk and disfigured. The boy did not see me, but was gazing on the stage, with a sad and wistful expression which spoke volumes, and as much as to say how intensely he envied the straight strong limbs of the young athletes.

I felt drawn by an irresistible impulse to have a chat with him, so making some excuse to the stage manager who was my companion, I approached the lad with some commonplace observation, to which he as politely replied. Gradually getting into conversation, I at length

drew from him the fact that the principal performer in the group of athletes was his father, and as he spoke the words his face lighted up until his beauty became almost unearthly. I hardly know now what made me ask the question, but I could not help saying: "Are you happy at home?" "Happy—why, sir, father is all I have in the world, and he thinks of nothing but how to make me happy." "But surely, my boy, would it not be better to stop at home with your mother of an evening?" It was a thoughtless, silly question after his last words, and I instantly regretted it, on seeing the look of sadness which came over his face as he replied, "Mother died, sir, when I was quite a child."

I suppose it was simply curiosity, but I felt an unaccountable desire to know how he came by those sadly shrunk limbs and crooked back. I led up to the question as delicately as I could, but to my surprise he respectfully asked me not to press for an answer. Just at this moment the troupe finished, and I noticed what a great sigh of relief he gave, as a fine handsome man came up to us, who he at once told me was his father. Feeling more interested than ever in the case, I explained the capacity in which I was visiting the theatre, and begged that Mr. De Fane (for so he was called in the bills) would, with his son, sup with me that night at the hotel.

I was again, however, doomed to disappointment, for Mr. De Fane excused himself on the ground that early hours and plain living were the only means by which a man of his somewhat dangerous profession could hope to keep a steady hand and a clear head for his work. Wishing them both a very cordial good-bye, I returned to my friend the manager, and when comfortably seated in his little sanctum, I abruptly asked him if he knew anything of the De Fanes. "Oh yes" was the reply "and theirs is a sad history, especially that of the boy." The story, short as it was, was so full of pathos, that I make no apology for giving it in the manager's own words:—

"It is just about ten years ago that I was business manager to a large travelling circus, and among the company engaged, was the man De Fane (whose real name by the way was Clarke) his wife and child, a boy about seven years old. They were all three handsome, but the child especially so. The woman, married though she was known to be, had countless admirers, and one day came the terrible news to poor De Fane that his wife had fled with some man to London. I shall never forget his look of horror and amazement, and though perfectly staggered at the news, he turned up all right at night with his boy, in time for his turn. They were then performing on the high swinging trapeze, and unfortunately no regulations were then in force as to there being a net underneath. The time for them to go on arrived, and as I was curious to see how De Fane would get through under the circumstances, I went into the promenade and looked on.

All went well until the last act, which was for De Fane, *with the boy clinging to his feet*, to swing almost across the building from one flying trapeze to the other. The music stopped as usual, and amid a dead silence De Fane, judging his distance with the utmost accuracy,

flew like a bird on to the second trapeze, but to my horror there was an awful crack and the wood snapped in two. Fortunately De Fane had got hold of one end with a grip of iron, but the terrible weight on the light iron fastening was fast giving way. De Fane made a gigantic effort to get his other hand on to the rope above, but failed twice in succession. We were all utterly powerless, though mattresses and straw were hurried from behind without a second's delay by the ring master. Quick as lightning the boy saw that it was his weight which was encumbering his father. De Fane made one last mighty effort, but the wood cracked again, and the boy seeing this called out "Good-bye, father!" and without a cry deliberately dropped a distance of full thirty feet.

Relieved of the weight, De Fane managed to pull himself up sufficiently to grasp the rope, and in another second he was safe. But the poor child lay bruised and bleeding in the ring, living, thank God, but a helpless cripple for life. I have seen many sad sights in a circus ring, but I never saw such a fine example of sublime heroism."

I need hardly add that I sought out father and son, and we have ever since been firm friends. Only the other day, however, I received a broken-hearted letter from poor De Fane, saying that his loved one had passed away to "where, beyond these voices, there is peace." Truly indeed may it be said of that young hero that there is

"A flower less on earth,
An angel more in heaven."



Our Play=Box.

"A PAIR OF SPECTACLES."

A Comedy in three acts, adapted from the French by SYDNEY GRUNDY.
First produced at the Garrick Theatre Saturday evening, Feb. 22, 1890.

Mr. Benjamin	.. }	Mr. JOHN HARE.	Bartholomew	.. ..	Mr. F. H. KNIGHT.
Goldfinch	.. }		Joyce	.. ..	Mr. R. CATHCART.
Uncle Gregory	.. ..	Mr. CHARLES GROVES.	Another Shoemaker	.. ..	Mr. JOHN BYRON.
Percy	.. ..	Mr. RUDGE HARDING.	Mrs. Goldfinch	.. ..	Miss KATE RORKE.
Dick	.. ..	Mr. SIDNEY BROUGH.	Lucy Lorimer	.. ..	Miss B. HORLOCK.
Lorimer	.. ..	Mr. C. DODSWORTH.	Charlotte	.. ..	Miss F. HUNTER.

Mr. Sydney Grundy, when he was unanimously called before the curtain at the close of "A Pair of Spectacles," too modestly gave the credit of the excellence of the piece to M.M. Labiche and Delacour, whose play "Les Petits Oiseaux" Mr. Grundy had adapted. Delightful as the original is, it would not have achieved such a brilliant success had it not been for the adapter's charming dialogue and the true humanity displayed in the various characters under their English guise. In one and all we recognized a type of someone or other we had met in our various walks in life, and even the most sceptical in their belief that any good exists in this pushing, striving world of ours, must have had his convictions shaken and been brought to think at least how far happier is the man who has faith in human nature, than he who distrusts everyone and knows not charity. Benjamin Goldfinch in the opening is the cheeriest and kindest of men; he is possessed of means, is married to a young wife who doats on him, has a son who is all he could wish, is beloved by his tenants, his tradespeople and his servants. These three latter classes, perhaps, take some advantage of his easy good-nature and impose on him to a certain extent; they plead piteous tales and are not pressed for their rent, they overcharge him, and his immediate servitors have too easy a time of it. But what matters this to Benjamin; his only wish is to see everyone happy so far as he can secure that end; he looks upon himself but as a steward of his wealth, and so he is rewarded. Unexpectedly his brother Gregory appears upon the scene. He is the very opposite, a self-made man. He is worth £200,000, which he boasts has been accumulated through his never having trusted anyone, given nothing in charity, believed in no tale of woe or distress; and when kindly Benjamin speaks to him of some suffering creature, he answers always in his North country accent "I know that mon, he cooms fra Sheffield." A discharged coachman of Benjamin's has written from St Giles's craving assistance. Gregory declares he is an imposter, the two brothers go together to find out the truth, and alas—Gregory is right. In his perturbation at the discovery, Benjamin breaks his spectacles and borrows his brother's, and from that moment he looks through them with his brother's sense. He returns and, once mistrustful of everyone, he weighs everything that comes into the house, he puts everything under lock and key. His old bootmaker he discovers puts bad leather in his boots, his old butler drinks his brandy, and, worst of all, he searches his wife's es-

critoire for letters which he believes she has received from a curate whom he has hitherto respected ; but he believes in his brother. From a genial, happy creature Benjamin is transformed into a hard, suspicious being, who will not save his oldest friend from possible ruin, though he could well spare the cash that would avert the downfall. Just then, the failure of a bank leads people to suppose that Benjamin himself is ruined, and he at once discovers how wrong he has been in his surmises. His young wife offers to sell her diamonds, the packet of love letters he has discovered are his own, written to her, that she has so treasured, his tenants come forward and pay their back rents, his nephew tenders to him the only valuable he possesses, his old friend whom he had refused to help presses on him quite a little fortune, he learns that the old butler, who wishes to remain with him without wages, is trustworthy, and, most wonderful of all, the hard-hearted brother Gregory brings out a deed of partnership for him to sign. For Gregory has learnt his lesson. His son Dick, whom he had sent forth penniless to fight the world, is not the prosperous barrister he imagined but steeped in debt, and has been actually arrested in his father's presence, and Gregory's heart has been softened by the spontaneous kindness of everyone to the man who had earned their gratitude by his nobility of nature and hitherto unceasing charity. If the drama of the present day is to educate and to raise the moral standard of an audience, surely "A Pair of Spectacles" will do so, for there is no preachee-preachee. It is deeply interesting, and there is in it so much humour as to make one smile and laugh, while leaving its best impression. Mr. Hare's acting is beyond praise ; indeed it is not acting, it is nature itself, so cheery and happy in its belief, so miserable while struggling against its new-formed suspicions, and once more so truly contented when, after recovering his own spectacles that have been mended, he with them recovers his belief in goodness. Little behind him was Mr. Charles Groves as the grasping, suspicious ironmaster Gregory, as hard as the metal in which he deals, so confident in his own acuteness and yet so woefully mistaken. It was an excellent performance, not the least exaggerated in treatment or appearance, and yet in such clever contrast to his brother so opposite in every way. Mr Rudge Harding as Percy was a manly young fellow, and Mr. Sydney Brough as Dick played with great tact. Mr. F. H. Knight gave a remarkably good rendering of the canny but true-hearted old bootmaker Bartholomew. Miss Kate Rorke was a very sweet young wife. Miss Blanche Horlock occasionally dropped her voice so much as to be almost inaudible. The other parts left nothing to be desired in their representation.

"DREAM FACES."

A dramatic fancy, in one act, by WYNN MILLER.

Placed in the evening bill at the Garrick Theatre, Saturday, February 22, 1890.

Robert	Mr. J. FORBES-ROBERTSON.	Margaret	Miss CARLOTTA ADDISON.
Philip	Mr. SYDNEY BROUGH.	Lucy	Miss BLANCHE HORLOCK.
Servant	Mr. STANLEY PRINGLE.		

When first produced in London at Terry's Theatre, Nov. 1, 1888, "Dream Faces" was so highly spoken of that it was fully expected it would form part of an evening bill almost immediately. Its reception at the Garrick Theatre fully justified the verdict then passed on it. It is a charming little work. Robert is an individual who, up to the opening of the play, has been everything undesirable. Engaged as a young fellow years before to Margaret, he deserted her to marry

another woman whom he treats no better. His wife dies—leaves a child, Lucy, that Margaret, true to the memory of her first love, adopts and brings up as her niece. The girl grows up and is betrothed to Philip, when Robert, who has not forsaken his evil courses, and who is desperately pressed for money, comes to demand a loan of Margaret, under the threat that if not granted he will claim his child. Margaret will not afford him assistance, but pleads that the girl, who has twined herself round her very heart-strings, shall remain with her. Robert persists in the enforcement of his claim—at any rate he will see his daughter. This is consented to on one condition, he shall pass himself as a friend of Lucy's father, whom she has all along supposed to be dead. From Lucy he learns that she has been ever brought up to revere his memory, and has always pictured him as the best and noblest of men. He also learns that for years past he has been living on the bounty of Margaret, she having made him the allowance which he thought he inherited. His better nature prevails, he beholds himself the ungrateful, selfish being that he has been. Kissing his child, he gives her into Margaret's arms and goes forth repentant, and with the determination to lead a better and a purer life in the future. It forms an exquisitely touching picture. Mr. Forbes-Robertson both as the devil-may-care, hardened criminal and as the man brought back to a sense of his shame and the noble purity and self-sacrifice of the woman who has loved him all her life, held his audience completely, while Miss Carlotta Addison's pathos and tenderness moved them to tears. Miss Blanche Horlock was very sweet and ingenuous, and Mr. Sydney Brough true and easy.

“AS YOU LIKE IT.”

Shakespeare's Comedy. Revived at the St. James's Theatre, Monday, February 24, 1890.

Duke	Mr. CHARLES FULTON.	Dennis	Mr. G. YORKE.
Duke Frederick ..	Mr. GEORGE CANNINGE.	Touchstone	Mr. CHARLES SUGDEN.
Jaques	Mr. ARTHUR BOURCHIER.	Silvius	Mr. MATTHEW BRODIE.
Amiens	Mr. AGER GROVER.	Corin	Mr. ROYDEN ERLYNNE.
First Lord	Mr. NORMAN FORBES.	William	Mr. ERSKINE LEWIS.
Le Beau	Mr. ERNEST LAWFORD.	Celia	Miss AMY MCNEIL.
Charles	Mr. F. TEALE LINGHAM.	Phœbe	Miss BEATRICE LAMB.
Oliver	Mr. WALTER GAY.	Audrey	Miss MARION LEA.
Jaques	Mr. HENRY ARNCLIFFE.	A Person represent- ing Hymen	} Miss VIOLET AMBRUSTER.
Orlando	Mr. LAURANCE CAUTLEY.	Rosalind	
Adam	Mr. FRED EVERILL.		Mrs. LANGTRY.

Time has dealt very kindly with Mrs. Langtry during the eight years that have elapsed since we last saw her in London as Rosalind, for while the destroyer has robbed the woman of none of her personal charms, he has allowed the novice to develop into an interesting and ripe artist. No Rosalind that has yet stepped the boards has ever quite satisfied us, but Mrs. Langtry's delineation of one of Shakespeare's most charming and most difficult characters, may take rank among the best. As Ganymede there was, perhaps, not sufficient of “a swashing and martial outside” that should have been assumed with the doublet and cross-gartered hose in which Mrs. Langtry appears—it was a little too feminine not to have betrayed the sex to even a lover, blinded by his own passion, but it was very bright and joyous, full of arch coquetry, longing fondness, and dainty charm. It was the embodiment of a consuming love, living on its own fire and taking fresh life from every verse and missive that Rosalind reads, and surely never did Rosalind conjure more sweetly and coaxingly for the success of a play than did Mrs. Langtry in speaking the epilogue. But long before the words were spoken the success was



MR. BEN DAVIES.

“Eftsoones they heard a most melodious sound.”

—SPENSER'S “FAERIE QUEENE.”

assured, and the new manageress of the St. James's could not but be well content with the prospects of her season. The play was produced under the direction of the Hon. Lewis Wingfield, and it is, therefore, perchance due to his guidance that the clown and the philosopher appeared to have changed characters—in lieu of the lightsome, merry Touchstone, chuckling at his own quips and oft fooling his hearers with his quaint wordings, we had in Mr. Sugden almost a cynic, who laid down the law in a didactic manner; and whereas Jaques tells us that he loves “melancholy better than laughing,” that he is “wrapped in a most humorous sadness,” we had in Mr. Bouchier a light-hearted, railing philosopher who mocked blithesomely at the follies of his fellows. It must be admitted, however, that the “Seven Ages” speech was delivered with excellent point even with the new reading of the character. Mr. Laurance Cautley was just such a romantic youth as the lovesick Orlando should be; he was picturesque in appearance, impassioned in his love scenes, and with just that spice of wonder at his own folly in wooing Ganymede that made the folly the more acceptable. The Adam of Mr. Everill, and the Sylvius of Mr. Matthew Brodie were excellent, the latter specially noticeable for the pure delivery of the text; and he had a most pleasing and capable Phœbe in Miss Beatrice Lamb. Miss Marion Lea's Audrey was the best that has been seen for years; her open-mouthed and wide-open-eyed bucolic admiration of Touchstone and his fine, and yet to her incomprehensible, periods were above praise. Miss Amy McNeil played with much vivacity and grace as Celia. Mention should also be made of Mr. Roydon Erlynne as Corin, a sterling performance, and of Mr. Charles Fulton for his kindly dignity as the banished Duke. Mr. Grover as Amiens led the music and sang his soli well; the chorus was efficient, but I must confess I was a little startled at Mr. Wingfield's introduction of the shepherdesses in the forest of Arden and their taking part in the music. The restoration of the Masque of Hymen with Miss Violet Ambruster as Hymen (who spoke her lines well), no one could cavil at, nor at the Morris dance in celebration of the nuptials. The St. James's Theatre looked very bright and fresh, having been prettily and tastefully redecorated by Messrs. Campbell, Smith and Co. The audience was a most fashionable one and included T.R.H. the Prince and Princess of Wales and the two young Princesses, the Duke and Duchess of Fife, several of the ambassadors, and the *crème de la crème* of society.

“MEADOW SWEET.”

Comedy in one act by “Terra Cotta.”

First produced at the Vaudeville Theatre, March 5, 1890.

Benjamin Barnes .. Mr. J. S. BLYTHE.
John Mr. CYRIL MAUDE.
Fred Topliff Mr. F. GILLMORE.

Jokel Mr. F. THORNE.
Julia Topliff Miss HANBURY.
Margery Meadows .. Miss ELLA BANISTER.

If “Meadow Sweet” be the first dramatic attempt of Miss Prevost (for that I am informed is “Terra Cotta's” real name), the young lady may be heartily congratulated. One or two of the speeches were a little too long, a defect that can easily be remedied, but the tone of the little play is healthy, the sentiment poetic, and the humour unforced. Some of the dialogue, too, is very bright, though the authoress makes one or two little slips in letting a country-bred lad so soon forget matters rustic. Benjamin Barnes, a genial, sturdy old farmer, determines that his son John shall hold his head high in the world, so he gives him a good education and gets him a clerkship in a

London bank. Margery Meadows is a sweet unaffected girl (her pet name gives the title to the play), who has been brought up with her cousin John, and when he leaves for the great city they are engaged. There must have been some natural taint in John's disposition, or he would hardly in a year or two have developed into such an unmitigated cad. When he comes home for a holiday, he is thoroughly ashamed of the old farm house and of his honest old father; and he lets Margery understand that his aspirations are far too high to wed with such a lowly maid as she is. He is full of his grand friends, the Topliffs, brother and sister, who have come down to spend the day. To them he makes all sorts of excuses for the boorishness of his father, the homeliness of the farm and his surroundings. He has only lowered himself completely in their esteem, however, for they are gentle in the truest sense of the word; they are disgusted with his meanness, and when he proposes to Julia, she administers to him such a rebuff as must penetrate even his thick hide of self complacency and conceit. Fred Topliff is so smitten with the grace and natural freshness of Margery, that he at once lays siege to her, and the curtain falls on a pretty picture of a hope that the girl, who has discovered that the idol she set up is but of the commonest clay, will soon be comforted and rewarded with an honest man's love. Miss Ella Banister is still rather too emphatic in the expression of her emotion, but otherwise was the type of a true-hearted English girl. Miss Hanbury was excellent as the outspoken Julia Topliff. Mr. Cyril Maude thoroughly carried out the author's conception of a mean-spirited, contemptible fellow, and Mr. F. Thorne as a shrewd, old farm servant was very amusing. "Meadow Sweet" should be in request for amateurs, for all the parts are good.

HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK.

A Tragedy by WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, as presented by Mr. F. R. Benson's Shakespearian Company at the Globe Theatre, on Thursday, March 6, 1890.

Claudius.. ..	Mr. CHARLES CARTWRIGHT.	A Priest	Mr. WALTER SHAW.
Hamlet	Mr. F. R. BENSON.	1st Gravedigger.. ..	Mr. G. R. WEIR.
Polonius	Mr. G. F. BLACK.	2nd Gravedigger	Mr. H. ATHOL FORDE.
Laertes	Mr. HERBERT ROSS.	1st Actor	Mr. ALFRED BRYDONE.
Horatio	Mr. OTHO STUART.	2nd Actor	Mr. EDWARD P. MAJOR.
Roscenrantz	Mr. ARTHUR GRENVILLE.	3rd Actor	Miss EDITH SELWYN.
Guildenstern.. ..	Mr. G. M. HOWARD.	4th Actor	Mr. HUGH MEADOWS.
Osric.. ..	Mr. GERALD GURNEY.	5th Actor	Mr. CHARLES BARWELL.
Marcellus	Mr. E. PERRY.	Messenger	Mr. G. HARROD.
Bernardo	Mr. E. SHERARD.	Ghost of Hamlet's father	Mr. STEPHEN PHILLIPS.
Francisco	Mr. C. M. HALLARD.	Gertrude	Miss ADA FERRAR.
Reynaldo	Mr. L. ROSOMAN.	Ophelia.. ..	Mrs. F. R. BENSON.

Whatever may be the shortcomings of Mr. Benson's Hamlet—and regretfully I say it, they are numerous—they are in a measure redeemed by the conscientiousness and evident study bestowed upon the text by an actor who is young enough to amend his faults, and who will in all probability, with more experience, give us a performance that is at least not disappointing as the present one is. To begin with, though we have warrant that Hamlet's appearance had much changed since his father's death, and that he was careless of his dress, there is no reason why Mr. Benson should have been so slovenly in his apparel and presented such an unpicturesque figure. Then he has an unfortunate habit of laying the stress too frequently on the wrong word, thus destroying the rhythm of the lines—he is, at times, essentially modern (notably in the scene with the players), and at others he rants. His best scenes were those with Ophelia and with his mother, the love he felt for the one and the filial affection for the other were convincing, and touched his audience; but, taken as a

whole, the performance was one of promise only, interesting but unimaginative and without the matured power to embody the actor's conception. Much of the business introduced is novel but unsatisfactory—the fall of Polonius into Gertrude's closet in *her* sight and that of Hamlet, belies the lines; the stamping on the picture of the King is effective but rather clap-trappy; and the arrangement of the stage for the players was in such a position as to have been invisible to at least one-third of the house. The bringing in of Ophelia's body on the bier, and subsequently to the grave, in the person of Mrs. Benson herself, was carrying realism a little too far, and it is to be hoped that by this time Hamlet's stabbing of the King is not the awkward affair it was on the first representation. There were some bright spots in a performance that, owing to the slow pace at which the play was taken, and the intolerably frequent dropping of the tableau curtain, lasted some four hours. The Ghost of Mr. Stephen Phillips was one of the best, if not the best, that has been seen for years; it was impressive and dignified and his elocution of the highest order. Mr. G. F. Black's Polonius was good, though a little wanting in humour. The Horatio of Mr. Otho Stuart was very commendable. Mr. G. R. Weir's 1st Gravedigger was racy, and Mr. Athol Forde as his assistant ably seconded him. Mr. Charles Cartwright's Claudius was to me a great disappointment, but allowance must be made on account of the actor having but just recovered from a most serious illness, which enforced a long absence from the stage. Mrs. F. R. Benson was a very weak, and to my mind, unsympathetic Ophelia, but the Gertrude of Miss Ada Ferrar was that of a true artist; it was full of dignity and grace, her lines were admirably delivered, but she looked decidedly too young for the character, though remarkably handsome.

“THE FAVOURITE OF THE KING.”

New and original historical play in four acts by F. S. BOAS and JOCELYN BRANDON.

First produced at the Comedy Theatre, Tuesday afternoon, March 11, 1890.

George Villiers (after-wards Duke of Buckingham)	Mr. ROYCE CARLETON.	Francis	Mr. THOMAS LEWEN.
Doctor Lambe.. .. .	Mr. BASSETT ROE.	Helen Aston	Miss DOROTHY DENE.
John Felton	Mr. J. R. CRAWFORD.	Lady Villiers	Miss LOUISE MOODIE.
Sir Roger Aston	Mr. A. BEAUMONT.	Lady Manners (after-wards Duchess of Buckingham)	Miss ANNIE ROSE.
Philip Barton.. .. .	Mr. LAURANCE D'ORSAY.	Cecil	Mrs. CARSON.

Had “The Favourite of the King” been produced some fifty years ago, it might with modifications have been accepted as possessing considerable merit, for audiences were fonder of blank-verse than they are now-a-days, unless it be of the very highest order, and though there are moments when the authors of the play under notice appear to have struck the true key-note, the melody too soon fades away and is lost. There is also a want of consistency in the characters of the two principals, George Villiers and Helen Aston, that is eminently unsatisfactory, and again the action, never too brisk, halts by the too frequent descent of the tableau curtain, which really made the play into one of eight acts instead of four. George Villiers, while yet an humble country gentleman, has plighted his troth to Helen Aston, and when he leaves to push his fortunes at court he promises to return and wed her on the ensuing May-day. His rapid advance in King James's favor, however, evidently weans him somewhat from his love, and his mother, Lady Villiers, who looks only to his advancement, is thoroughly averse to his marriage. Through the instrumentality of Doctor Lambe, an astrologer and charlatan, it is

pointed out to Villiers that his future will be wrecked should he join himself to a Romanist, as Helen is, and he meanly takes advantage of this excuse to break off the match. Helen does not calmly accept the situation, but vows revenge. Villiers becomes Duke of Buckingham; his mother for her skill in leechcraft is established as the King's nurse, and she plots with Lambe to work a charm and so take away James's life, her son being all powerful with the Heir-Apparent. Helen seeking Lambe's aid on behalf of her father who is "sick unto death," overhears in the charlatan's study sufficient to make her believe that Villiers is a party to the King's demise. She threatens to denounce her former lover, and is at once put by him in durance vile. He in the meantime has married Lady Manners. Helen is liberated from prison by John Felton, who bears an enmity to Buckingham for services unrequited, and at the same time that she discovers that her former lover was innocent so far as any hurt to the King was concerned, learns that Buckingham's assassination is decided on. Though she has treated his offer of a renewal of his love (he being married) with contempt, and appears to hate now as much as she once felt affection, her passion for Buckingham suddenly revives, and she sets forth to Portsmouth in the hope of warning him against the plot. She arrives too late, the Duke has already been stabbed by Felton; he dies in Helen's arms, and the curtain falls upon her paroxysm of despair and woe at the loss of the man who had proved so unworthy of *her* and of the wife who so fondly loved him. Mr. Royce Carleton, in a character quite out of his usual line, was a success; he cast off that coldness of manner that is usual with him, and threw a world of passion into his love scenes. Miss Dorothy Dene was not altogether satisfactory; though some of her lines were very finely delivered, the performance was an uneven one, her scene in the prison and that over the dead body of Buckingham proving the most artistic. Mr. Bassett Roe must be credited with having saved from being quizzed a part that was almost ridiculously like that bestowed on the wizard of a pantomime, and Miss Louise Moodie's elocution as Lady Villiers was an intellectual treat. Miss Annie Rose was a very sweet and loveable woman as Lady Manners, and betrayed none of that affectation and mannerism which has so often marred her acting. To Mrs. Carson must be accorded the most unqualified praise for the brightness and spontaneity displayed by her as Cecilia, a coquettish lady-in-waiting. Had we seen more of her, the play would not have been so depressing; as it was her appearances invariably cheered and reanimated her audience. A serenade was very commendably sung by Mr. Templer-Saxe, the piece was richly mounted, and the incidental music by Mr. C. A. Lee pleasing.

CECIL HOWARD.



Our Musical-Box.

The Royal Society of Musicians celebrated their 152nd anniversary with a banquet at St. James's Hall on the 4th, the Lord Mayor presiding. The society is the patriarch of Musical Associations; a "glorious fabric," as Sir Henry Isaacs styled it. There is, however, a "Musician's Company," originally instituted in the reign of Edward IV. but I have never heard of a city dinner under its auspices, in accordance with the custom of other city guilds and companies, and I don't remember it as being represented at Mr. Charles Harris's Lord Mayor's Show, a year or two ago.

I cannot help wondering what Sir Arthur Sullivan thinks of the "arrangement" of *The Gondoliers*, as published by Messrs. Chappell, for voice and pianoforte, and pianoforte alone. It is so unmistakably American; bald, thin, and uninteresting. It is the sort of arrangement one would look for from some second-rate school music-master. Absence of difficulties is naturally a necessity, taking into account the slight knowledge possessed by the greater number who purchase the "arrangement" of an opera. But that it is possible to secure this without descending to the level of Mr. J. H. Wadsworth, of Boston, U.S.A., is shown by the admirable arrangement, by an English musician, of *Iolanthe*. I am quite aware, Sir Arthur and Messrs Chappell, that the responsibility rests on the copyright question. If one is to judge by *The Gondoliers*, it is no wonder America is fond of "stealing" our best songs. She cannot have many of her own.

Miss Annie Albu, of the Carl Rosa Opera Company, has been and is singing at the Alhambra, and meeting with such emphatic approval as goes very far to show that "variety" audiences can appreciate other than "lion comiques," *et hoc genus omne*. For some time Miss Albu replaced Miss Marie Tempest as "Doris" at the Lyric, and is the possessor of a cultivated voice, and a pleasant enunciation. The full Alhambra orchestra accompanies her, and anything more perfect than its performance could not be desired or obtained. Delicate and subdued, yet audible, M. Jacobi's orchestra is never once too much *en evidence*, never for one moment submerges the singer's voice in its own sea of sound. It is a delight to listen to it.

It seems like old times to find Miss Violet Cameron playing "Germaine" in *Les Cloches de Corneville* at the Opera Comique. Her predecessor in the part, Miss Helen Capet, certainly lacked many things that are as a rule desirable on the stage. She was painfully stiff, sang inexperiencedly and acted without life. Had she been even passably supported by the gentleman who tried, and now tries, to assume the part of "The Marquis," it would not have been so bad. I can only draw the veil of kindly silence over his performance.

Miss Irene Verona was very much better than I expected, and sang her songs with a *verve* that did much to brighten what bid fair to be a dull show. Mr. W. F. Glover's orchestra is very good indeed. How much life there may prove to be in the old opera yet, Miss Cameron and Time will demonstrate.

Mr. William Coenen's Pianoforte Recital at Princes Hall on the 13th, drew a small but very appreciative audience. Mr. Coenen is a fluent performer, but seemed somewhat cold in his rendering of Beethoven's Sonate, Op. 53. In the briefer selections, embracing Liszt, Chopin, and Rubinstein, he appeared to more advantage. With commendable modesty the programme only contained one composition by the reciter, a "Nocturne," a simple and graceful trifle.

Here is a fact that will encourage rising genius that thinks it can win undying fame and popularity, to say nothing of such trifles as bread and cheese. Michael William Balfe, senior, composer, died in 1870, full of years and glory; Michael William Balfe, junior, is living in 1890, in poverty, and is to be the recipient of a charitable benefit by which it is hoped to amass the sum of forty pounds. Who would not be the descendant of a popular composer? Perhaps someone who coined money out of Balfe, senior, will come forward to help Balfe, junior. I repeat the word: perhaps.

Mrs. Ernest Pertwee, who gave a recital at Steinway Hall on March 19th, is a sister of Madame Bertha, Miss Eva, and Miss Decima Moore, so belongs to a talented family. She has a peculiarly high soprano, a voice more suited to the French songs for which she was set down, than to an English ballad. Mr. Ernest Pertwee recited no less than nine pieces of all kinds; but his gestures are monotonous, two in particular being tricks he should learn to avoid. Mr. A. Lindo and Mr. Van Lennep assisted, the latter accompanying Mrs. Pertwee in yet another "Spanish bolero song" of his own composition, possessing nothing Spanish but its title, and little of the bolero but the tempo.

Wednesday night, March 19th, saw the last Ballad Concert of the season, and a crowded house, to hear Sims Reeves. An apology was made for the veteran tenor, on the score of a slight cold; and the audience, demanding an *encore*, had to accept it instead. Notwithstanding this, there were seven *encores*, which, to the credit of the audience, included that of Gounod's "Ave Maria," from Madame Neruda. Curious how Ballad Concert audiences are so conservative, and greet with effusion their old favourites, however and whatever they sing! Miss Alice Whitacre, deputy for Miss Lehmann, absent, was among the few not *encored*; yet a finer, clearer, and fuller voice than hers is very rare, and combined with such perfect execution, and a more than acceptable presence, suggests at once the lyric stage. Please, Madame Sterling, do not sing such deadly dreary old songs as the "Three Ravens." If old songs be in the fashion, are there none of less gruesome tendency, with an equally proper moral? Mr. Foli was in good voice; Mr. Maybrick had a cold. Mr. Eaton Fanning's choir made us thoughtful with Macfarren's lovely part-song "The Sands of Dee" and merry with Dr. Bridge's "Bold Turpin." So ended Mr. Boosey's twenty-fourth season. *Fuit.*

The concerts of the month have been innumerable, omitting such fixtures as the "Pops," the Crystal Palace Saturdays, and the Ballad concerts. The Bach Choir's first concert, conducted by Professor Stanford, drew a large audience to St. James's Hall on the 25th ult. On the 3rd, M. de Pachmann gave his farewell Chopin recital at St. James's Hall. Both Madame Backer Gröndahl and Mr. Anton Hartvigson gave recitals on the 4th. Dr. Mackenzie's "Cotter's Saturday Night" and "Dream of Jubal" formed the R. C. S. programme on the 5th, Miss Julia Neilson, as the reciter, making an undoubted success in what is usually a thankless part, her stage knowledge and her fine voice aiding her. Multiplicity of others sent me no tickets, so I don't know anything about them.—Mr. Edward Lloyd sang at the Ballad Concert on the 12th, and sailed for America on the 15th.

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

NEW MUSIC RECEIVED.

From Ricordi and Co. : "Six Romances," for pianoforte, by Carlo Albanesi. These are six graceful *morceaux*, without any particular technical difficulty, and equally without any very great originality. Schumann *sans* melody, they can be learnt by heart, played a few times and then—forgotten.—From Swan and Co. : "Rock of Ages," song by Odoardo Barri. Evidently suggested by the well-known hymn, but a very beautiful song, with an impressive *recitative* introduction, and a fine *chorale*, written with skill and feeling.



Our Amateurs' Play-Box.

Somebody who lived in the dark or middle ages said that it was love that made the world go round. "A palpable lie, on the face of it," as Miss Gertrude Kingston says in "New Lamps for Old," when she's told she can't drive a cab without a licence. Had that steel-clad lunatic with his lady's twenty-four button mousquetaire glove (or the middle-aged equivalent for it), floating in the breeze along with the barn-door fowl plumes in his helmet, been living now, he would not have put it down to "love." Competition ! That's the new motive power. And depend upon it that when even so self-centred and narrow-circled a thing as an amateur club fails to recognise the pressure of competition, its end is not far off. This it was that sent the Newlyn painters hurry-scurry from Penzance to Falmouth nearly a month ago. Professor Herkomer goes in for plays and rustic opera at Bushey. Well, this other "school" of art down south shall not rest beaten. So away with melancholy, paint glorious scenes, knock up the prettiest of prosceniums, master "In Honour Bound" and "A Scrap of Paper," and then, hey, for the mouth of the Fal ! And then came more competition still, for the Falmouth players must be

represented, too. So they take the first piece, and the Newlynners the second. And each friendly rival starts in for the tournament. And excellently was it fought. Indeed, if the print were smaller I'd confess that this was better far than those slow and cumbrous things at Bushey. The Professor's moving moon is good, but a moving actor is better. And how express and admirable was the Lady Carlyon of Mrs. Freeman, a good actress and a true, and what capable support was given her by Mr. and Mrs. Lawder Eaton and Mr. Cecil Broad. And if at moments the subtle comedy of Sardou was o'er deep water for Mrs. Gotch and Mr. Garstin, what then? Did they not struggle through with courage, oft-times showing grace and skill very pleasant indeed to witness? Did not Mr. Gotch and Mrs. Forbes play, too, the jealous Baron and his wife with energy and earnestness; and Mrs. Stanhope Forbes make of the worm hunter a figure Frank Dadd might have painted; and the children lovers, was it not good to see the pretty playfulness of Miss Applin and Mr. Crooke? to all which questions there is but one answer. Why, certainly! An Americanism, it's true; but, being that, I am thus brought back to the nation that keeps most of us competing, and so the last note is one with the first. Competition is good for the—amateur's—soul.

From Falmouth to Plymouth is but a step for a giant with seven league boots, and, being on my way towards London, Plymouth shall come next. There the garrison company, if that expression does not sound rude, have sounded the call to arms, mustered in noble force, and rallied at the Grand Theatre, Stonehouse, to do honour to Mrs. Kemmis. Byron's "Old Soldiers," and Gilbert's "Creatures of Impulse," are not exactly novelties. But out of town the appetite for things dramatic is never quite so jaded. And here they seemed as fresh as, well, fresh eggs (not new-laid ones), fresh enough not to distract the attention from a goodly dish of very palatable acting. Major Moore Lane is an actor of more than usual experience, and if his Lionel Leveret is not quite masterly, it is fluent, pungent, smart, and taking. Cassidy demands something more than these, and Major Blest tried hard to supply it. At odd times he was quite successful, but generally the will had to be taken for the deed, and the will was a good one. Mrs. Kemmis was charming as Kate McTavish, but Mrs. Moore Lane proved a worthy rival in spirit and energy. Captain Strachan and Mr. Adair were not so rigid in stage positions as they doubtless would be on military duty, but their laxity interfered with nobody, and there was promise in both. In Mr. Gilbert's plays the actors rarely seem able to appear creatures of impulse, unless the author or a deputy has taught them all the wrinkles of his stage management. At any rate, the artifice of the whole thing was apparent enough here, in spite of some really artistic playing by Major and Mrs. Moore Lane, Mrs. Kemmis, and Captain Strachan, whose sudden skip from the Byronic to the Gilbertian must have asked a flexibility equal to an acrobat's.

"Jim the Penman," heavy as it is, is not too weighty for a club like the Whittington. More especially is this the case when an experienced *cicerone* like Mr. Trollope is on the spot to post them in all the details he has mastered, and warn them of any perils they may be for blindly daring. Mr. Herbert James would be an effective melodramatic actor. He favours the highly-coloured superficial

school. And there is enough strength of personality about him to make him an acceptable disciple of it. The Ralstons of Mr. Willard and Mr. Dacre were more natural beings than his; but amateurs always suffer from irrepressible desire to focus the audience at every moment, and that was the great weakness of Mr. James's clever acting. Miss Alexis Leighton is, perhaps, the one actress possible for Mrs. Ralston; the one, I mean, who could be secured by amateurs. All her work is good—no, more than good. She is quiet yet strong, artistic yet bold; emphatic yet convincing; and the help she lent to the play and the other actors was almost incalculable. Mr. C. H. Dickinson had a hard task in following Mr. Beerbohm Tree as Baron Hartfeldt. He has physique for the character. Variety of style is not altogether wanting. The actor does not begrudge his parts thought and study. On the whole it was a graphic rendering of the old swindler, lacking finesse and vividness, but neatly played and showing dramatic ability of more than common order. As careful a piece of work as any was the Captain Redwood of Mr. Glover. A difficult part this, and one requiring infinite tact and resource. The infinite was unattainable, but there were many good points to commend in the actor's endeavour to compass it. Mr. Clarke is more frequently than not amusing, and this occasion was not an exception to the rule. He and several of his more successful companions though, Mr. Raynes, Mr. Wells, and Mr. Dalton among them, wanted spurring badly. Delivery, method, and manner were all far too slow.

An amateur play is really a very wonderful thing. A complete work with no beginning, no middle, and no end. Occasionally, however, it is otherwise, and an author stands the best chance of winning that "otherwise," if he limits himself to a narrow view of just one or two lives, cuts out a slice or so as it were, and serves it up without any introductory grace. Colonel Armytage wisely took this course in writing "Flamborough Rocks," which he produced at the Spa Theatre, Scarborough, last month. An artist of romantic tendencies, a vicar's daughter, an old fisherman and his wife, and a strange woman, of course said to be the hero's wife, and equally of course, having regard to the title, found dead at the foot of the cliff, make up the *dramatis personæ*; and the true lovers, having been parted in act i. by this sad event, are at the end of act ii. happily reconciled. That is all; but, as far as it goes, it is a pretty and a workmanlike all. Colonel Armytage may at any rate be encouraged to try again. Miss Mallorie made a charming heroine, quiet and expressive, in many ways a striking contrast to the George Carlyon of Colonel Edwards, whose experience in "leading lovers" parts can hardly have been wide or deep. The author gave a clever character sketch of the old fisher-body, who naturally had the shrewdest and smartest things in the piece to say, Mrs. Gordon Heslop supplying the companion picture of Dora's nurse, and scoring no less heavily. "The Jacobite" followed, and furnished the majority with a good chance of proving how our coat and waist-coat fashions unfit a man for jack boots, lace ruffles, and a sword. Some there were, though, whose soldierly training made them equal to all this and more. These came best through the acting, which was distinguished by much spirit and a fair amount of sincerity, the most satisfactory being Colonel and Mrs. Armytage, a delightful soubrette, Colonel Edwards and Mrs. Heslop, and Miss Thompson, a painstaking heroine of promising talents and winning manner.

Mrs. Charles Sim is perhaps the most widely-known of all lady amateurs. In half-a-dozen short seasons she has won a reputation second to none, and equalled only by very few. From Mayfair to Millwall and Belgravia to Bow, her acting is everywhere acknowledged as sound, artistic, and intellectual; and whether diffusing Mr. Jerome's doctrines of self-sacrifice, from a "fit-up" platform in the East End, beneath the banner of the Primrose League, and thereby leading the dock labourers to connect politics with play-acting (not altogether erroneously!), or appearing in state at St. George's Hall, Mrs. Sim is sure of a large and admiring audience. The blue ribbon of the amateur stage, a place in the Oxford company, was captured two years since, and with them her most ambitious work has been done: "Merry Wives of Windsor," "Julius Cæsar," and, last



month, Browning's "Strafford," in all which the actress made a deep impression. Mrs. Sim is unusually versatile, ranging from romantic drama ("Camilla's Husband") through emotional comedy and juvenile heroines, to the broad humour of Mr. Gilbert's eccentric creations. Her most striking performances have been those of the greatest difficulty—Constance in "Young Mrs. Winthrop," and Lady Carlisle in "Strafford," both arduous characters, and played with intense conviction. Mrs. Sim is a true artist, studying earnestly, and preferring to carry a banner in Shakespeare to the lead in Calmour. Her favourite characters are Mr. Jerome's heroines in

“Barbara” and “Sunset,” over which she finds her dockyard audiences crying, like *Oliver Twist*, for more ; and when not engaged in working up some charity performance on a big scale for “the classes” to pour out their guineas over, her chief delight is in a journey to the wilderness at the other end of town, there to supply “the masses” with a feast of the same artistic fare—for nothing.

“Bootles’ Baby” is a large order for amateurs. Just the thing for the garrison companies who never seem able to steer clear of Byron and the grand old fossils of the days that, thank heaven and the Bancrofts, are no more, for they can wear the jack-boots and shell jackets, the padded chests and flapping sabretaches, as to the manner born ; and, with them, the low-hung cavalry sabres will not inopportunately dangle between their legs and endanger a serious scene ; all which is of vast importance in the presentation of a play. But with amiable gentlemen whose lives are passed on the Stock Exchange, or somewhere “in the City,” the martial stalk is apt to be a shamble, the eye, like Mars to threaten and command, has only a reflected light (from the gas lamps on the stage), and, somehow or other, we do not feel in the presence of those noble defenders, for whose butterfly-existence the ratepayers are so heavily taxed. Luckily, the Crystal Palace Club is very strong in the matter of presentable actors. They boast half-a-dozen “juveniles” to any rival institution’s one ; and if Bootles’ joints were not quite perfectly articulated, and the curve of the chest was concave rather than convex, no fault could be found with the other Lancers, who were as smart a set of men as any in Her Majesty’s service. Mr. Aste is an excellent actor, and the hero suited him well. He is sincere and simple in style, and earnestness supplies something of the colour that is lacking in emphasis and elaboration. His acting with Mignon would have been a revelation to some London actors who fancy themselves at home with children. Mr. Sansbury took another step up with his restrained but powerful study of Gilchrist. The finish of his playing was a lesson to several of his fellow actors. The Athenæum generally is forcible, but thin and sketchy. Mr. Biddulph Butler with remarkable tact turned Captain Lucy into a delicately coloured character “thumb-nail.” There is nothing much in the part, but all there is was made to stand out prominently by very pretty touches of thought and skill. Mr. Robinson and Mr. McAnally dressed the stage ; and Mr. Maitland Dicker, over restless and under-studied, won a liberal allowance of well-deserved applause, both for his humorous acting as Saunders and his discreet direction of the play. Miss Evelyn Hughes, an amateur Mignon, did wonders with the part, in spite of the learnt-lesson manner and delivery. In several little bits, indeed, she challenged comparison with little Miss Terry, by no means to her own disadvantage. Miss Isabel Maude made the most of Helen Grace, a thankless part, on which this admirable actress was quite wasted ; and merit in various degrees showed fitfully in the unequal efforts of Miss Birkett, Miss Becker, and Miss Condy.

An audience should always pay for its amusement. If not in money, then in some small matter of self-sacrifice or personal discomfort. It forces them to take a direct interest in the performance. And the more they look for some return of pleasure the more certain they will be to find it. The Brunswick House Dramatic Club discovered this at their fifth production this season. The night was chill and

stormy. Consequently everyone had foregone a little comfort in turning out to see the acting. With this result, that a first night at Terry's could not have yielded more abundant laughter or heartier enjoyment. Not that the programme was much of a novelty. The ordinary mixture—one teaspoonful of comedy to three of farce, an hour or so after dinner. On the score of freshness, therefore, the draught could hardly be called alluring. But the sharp air and the feeling that come what may they *must* relish it on such an evening, made it extra palatable. Wise club to avoid all cause for grumbling, and lucky club to get so genial a gathering of judges. Mr. Thomas's "Lady Fortune" opened the ball and soon revealed Mr. Frank Grahame in the light of an eccentric comedian, discreet, finished, and inventive. Mr. Edgeworth was the artist Guy, and made as manly a hero as the part would permit. The stage lawyer (*vide* "Stageland") was carefully reproduced by Mr. Filer; and Miss Nellie Keer as Kate Cunliffe attempted a much more artistic reading of the commonplace young heroine than most amateurs are content with, and with surprisingly good results. Miss Kate Vernon was quietly effective as Mrs. Cunliffe, and Sarah had a capable representative in Miss Lily Phillips. All the highly amusing and utterly impossible situations of Mr. Dilley's "Glimpse of Paradise" (which naturally followed in the wake of "Lady Fortune") were received with uproarious delight; thanks in the first place to the well timed acting and smoothly worked business of the piece, and in the second place to the efforts of Mr. B. Newton and Mr. Edgar Lunnon. Dove, the timorous poet, was drawn on broadly funny lines and played with unflagging spirit, while Mr. Lunnon as the romantic Frenchman gave an artistic reading of the part, full of character suggestion, but notable for an entire absence of exaggeration. Good work, differing in quality as in kind, was also done by Mr. Leslie, Mr. Knight, and Mr. Marsland, who all evinced more or less aptitude for this class of play; and what little light lies ready to hand in the parts of Laura, Susan, and Euphemia, was not allowed to remain hidden beneath the bushel of diffidence or nervousness by Miss Wells, Miss Vernon, or Miss Phillips.

"Strafford" at Oxford.

THE Oxford amateurs have settled one vexed question by their commendable revival of Robert Browning's impracticable tragedy. They have proved the existence of a body of actors of riches, following, ambition, and artistic means, sufficient to render the stage most valuable services if they will only utilise these aright. When a club can pack its theatre half-a-dozen nights and bring down whole trains full of shining "lights o' London," including two-thirds the critics and half the hangers-on, it is obviously a force. But at present that force is being to some extent wasted. A great deal is said now-a-days about the divorce between Literature and the Drama. And no one can doubt the truth of the charge. With the exception of Mr. Robert Buchanan and Mr. Hall Caine, no one who has actually won his spurs upon the field of letters can be said to be writing for the stage.

Now it is not to be credited that writers of imaginative power never have dreams they would be over-joyed to see made real, turned to flesh and blood upon the stage. Mr. Walter Besant has

confessed in one of his delightful novels that he can imagine no pleasure equal to that of watching the creatures of his brain in living form moving a multitude of men and women through the medium of his thoughts, his invention, his expressions. The every-day business of the novelist puts him in touch with the stage. He is for ever piecing together the puzzle bits of motive and of passion. He is for ever standing away in the auditorium of home, of library, of railway train, and wherever men and books do congregate, to see how this last new design in patchwork humanity will look. It follows as a mere matter of course that he will often have the stage in view when so placing his puppets. And it is pretty certain that the hand sometimes follows the eye in fitting his creations to the narrow limits of the proscenium and the confines of the scene dock.

I remember a conversation I had a year or so ago with one of our best known and most enterprising managers, which bore directly upon this point. He was deploring the public's insistence upon an actor continuing ever in the path associated with his success. And he gave as an illustration of his difficulties the instance of a romantic play offered him by Mr. W. E. Henley, and written by that gentleman in collaboration with Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson. "Here," he said, "was a play by two writers of genius. There was excellent stuff in it, stirring plot, good situations, characters fresh in themselves, and still more freshly drawn; dialogue capital, plenty of humour and lots of romance, and the public getting highly interested in everything done by one of the authors. Yet I had to reject it. Why? Because my audiences come night after night to see my leading man and my leading lady go through this, that, and the other; and if I break through this routine and show them in a new light, and, perhaps, ring the curtain down on a catastrophe, they'll all stay away; and my reputation for successes will go too, a very much more serious matter than the money loss on a single failure." And this was one of the shrewdest men in London. Well, it would seem that his opinions were shared by all his brother managers—or, perhaps, no one else saw the merits he praised so highly—for nothing has ever been seen of this fair offspring of Literature in union with the Drama.

Now it appears to me that it is in this direction the Oxford gentlemen should set their faces. There are several London clubs with actors strong enough and ambition vast enough to grapple with original and untried work. But in London amateurs play for charity. That means they cut down all expenses in order to plume themselves upon giving large sums to deserving institutions. A noble aim, no doubt, but one that handicaps their artistic enterprise sorely. Let the skill of the actors be what it may, writers cannot be expected to entrust their work to a company showing a tendency to leave undone, for the sake of a few pounds' extra expenditure, those valuable touches of scenic or costume or mechanical effect which ought to be done; nor can they be brought to allow the first glimpse of their cherished but rejected novelties to be caught through the mist engendered of hurried rehearsal and insufficient study. For London amateurs are chiefly busy men whose leisure hours are lightly wiled away over a fascinating art; not ardent students willing to burn midnight oil in probing subtle depths of human character.

But at Oxford all is altered. There are enthusiasts who can and doubtless will give ample time to study. There are no questions of cheese-paring economy that another ten-pound note shall be handed to the Home for Unsuccessful British and Foreign Company Promoters. And

there is an atmosphere (possibly fictitious, but, to authors, reassuring) of scholarship and simple-hearted devotion to the subject in hand, that should gain for these young actors the confidence of every would-be Sheridan and Shakespeare, who makes himself a name in letters only to have it scorned and flouted when he carries it to the stage door. Give the stage a lead. That is what young Oxford should do. It wants it badly enough. The mere existence of the *matinée* system proves that. Managers know next to nothing of the public's actual wants. They are much too heavily burdened with responsibilities to travel far from the ordinary lines of the playwright's pen. And the public accepts conventionality because nothing better is tried. Mr. Alfred Austin has a comedy now ready. Who is to give it a trial? Mr. Andrew Lang perhaps has fashioned one of Mr. Haggard's terrible fancies into a tragedy of unusual horror, but also, it may be fairly expected, of unusual excitement. Look at the fate of *She*, and judge if its dramatic qualities were given a fair chance. Managers look out for known men whose plays have been weighed in the balance and not found wanting. And authors rarely have a lot of money to throw away on the bungled *matinée* that is now the only other test. There is but one Mr. Jerome to sell a hundred thousand of one work in half-a-dozen months. To most a couple of hundred pounds is a large sum, and their play's trial trip must wait.

Now, why should not this pile of interesting MSS. be tested by the Oxford actors? They are anxious for original work. They can afford to do it well. Their efforts command the attention of critics and many still more influential personages. Authors would sooner let their plays be handled by good amateurs than see the dust upon them getting thicker year by year. Come, let us see what Mr. Stevenson's dramatic gold will pan out in the hands of the O.U.D.S. But, in any case, no more of Browning!

There were many reasons against *Strafford* being played, and only one in favour of the scheme. It was no novelty, for the Browning Society had ventured on the work. It had been proved unactable; or, rather, ineffective. The characters, one and all, demanded finished actors of peculiar gifts denied to inexperienced men. There were three *cons*. The one *pro*. was that the author's recent death attracted great attention to any project of this kind, and a *succès de curiosité* was assured. This denoted shrewdness in the club's directors, but the revival was, nevertheless, a mistake. The only way to gain a genuine success for this finely written tragedy would be to hold an examination in Browning, which every member of the audience must pass; for nothing but the closest acquaintance with the text and the methods of thought of all the characters could make their words and deeds quite comprehensible.

Much of Browning—and this play is no exception—is like a paper chase—the hares start first and leave for you a trail by which alone you can get safely through to the end. But the trail is not continuous; and if you lose it, or follow up a false track, there is the dickens to pay before you get it right again. Now, this is all very interesting and stimulating when you are settled down at your own convenience and given your own time to hunt in; but it becomes a different matter altogether when you have a dozen guides to show you the way, all travelling at such a pace, and forcing you to keep up too, that you have no time to look about you, note the surroundings, or indeed do more than catch a glimpse of the trail now and then, and realise at the finish that you *have* got through somehow. The

more experienced your guide the better you understood, of course. The trail was made clearer and you were allowed to linger for a moment here and there to master prominent features. Hence it came about that the actor most skilled in reading the heart came out best ; and the first place of all was undoubtedly Mrs. Charles Sim's. All that this clever lady has done has borne the stamp of intellect. Not infrequently the cleverness of conception has not been equalled by that of execution. But here was a notable exception.

The character of Lady Carlisle is not an easy one to determine, and still less an easy one to clearly represent ; yet, by dint of close study of every turn in the woman's brain, and by a stern bending of each energy to the task of making that turn distinct and intelligible, something very like the woman herself was set upon the stage, an impressive, dramatic, convincing figure. Gestures were well studied, yet natural and speaking. Dignity and grace of bearing were supplemented by a marked command of facial play, and, for the most part, emphasis and intonation were singularly well bestowed. Force and depth of feeling were freely in evidence, and pathos (perhaps not quite "unmixed with baser matter") was admirably assumed in one fine scene. Mrs. Sim, indeed, won a notable triumph for the amateur stage, for it is certain that few actresses could have given so vivid a picture of this baffling woman.

In consistency, the art of presenting a character complete in itself and suggesting nothing of the actor's diverse nature, there was a great gulf between Mrs. Sim's acting and her companions'. It was hard to tell on what lines this or that particular part was being played. "Carpe Diem" and "Sufficient unto the day" seemed the war cry of these warriors. "Make the most out of each scene and play it for what it (not the drama) is worth" appeared to be the rule of conduct. But whether this was the stage manager's instruction, or whether the actors really found Browning a nut too hard to crack, this method, like Mercutio's wound, "served," and brought most of them through to a gallant end.

Mr. Henry Irving, junior, made a highly picturesque *Strafford*. The actor's youth and pleasant personality, combined with the poet's deliberate white-washing of this tyrant's character, and the Irving partiality for making villains sympathetic, ran amuck through the pages of history. No gloomy-looking genius, a slave to ambition, terrible in passion, strutted and fretted his little hour upon the boards. But a gallant young hero who declaimed his wordy speeches with great sincerity, flung astonishing intensity into several scenes, gave frequent promise of becoming an emotional actor of some value, and stamped his final scene with genuine talent. There was too urgent a desire to make much of nothing, to elaborate subtle points where we were upon the mere fringe of the man's nature, and so tempt us to our own undoing in the expectation of portentous results. But if, as it is said, Mr. Irving is but a boy in years, these faults will quickly be corrected ; and indeed, all else may now be passed unnoticed, save the remarkable intuitive perception that reveals the actor born. As the effort of a very young man, *Strafford* was certainly a surprising and impressive piece of work.

To Mr. E. H. Clark, an actor of more experience, Pym had been entrusted ; and here I looked for a strongly drawn character ; partly because work of a full-blooded nature has often fallen to this gentleman's share, and partly because the poet has given him liberty to sketch the man on historical lines, and one would have thought in such a case

an actor scarcely could go wrong. There was but small trace, though, of "the subtlest of diplomatists and the grandest of demagogues." King Pym, the courtly Somersetshire squire, equally at home with genial manner and crushing invective, was too grand a figure for the painter's brush. And much of the massive force, the iron will, the giant resolution of this saviour of the Commons, was calmly sacrificed at the last to the actor's wish to win some surface sympathy! It is not of such plastic stuff fine actors can be made. Mr. Clark, however, put in a lot of sound work, played with variety, was forcible and rugged, bore himself boldly and with some consciousness of power, and used his brain as well as hands and face throughout the part. His incisiveness and impulse stood out in bold relief against the background of uncertainty furnished by too many of his comrades, who appeared to act entirely to order and with an almost utter lack of spontaneity.

Welcome exceptions to this rule were found, however, in the Hollis, Vane, and Holland. Lord Warkworth is at present timid. He fears to spread his wings lest the Sun of Passion should betray him, and, Icarus-like, he should have a fall; but there is true feeling for dramatic expression, and a little practice and encouragement will work wonders. Mr. Farmer and Mr. Whittaker, too, have a pretty notion of playing. Already they are easy, and know how to isolate a point to make it tell, without revealing the machinery. No light accomplishment for actors half the age of many of our London "earnest students"—save the mark! Mr. Hornby and Mr. Seaton with less to do and less means of doing it, still earned some little praise; and, if for several of the others it was a case of "don't shoot the gentleman, he's doing his best," it must be remembered that so formidable a cast must have taxed the club's resources grievously, and perhaps many a recruit was made where nothing but good nature prompted the enlistment. The King and Queen could not do more than recall those marvellously winning figures Mr. Irving and Miss Terry have often made of this ill-fated couple. And the recollection did but serve to point each failing in Miss Behnke and Mr. Mackinnon. "'Tis true, 'tis pity, and, pity 'tis 'tis true." But thus it was and the remainder thus—no one could have satisfied any who had once seen these, and there might be worse and less loyal actors than the luckless Oxford successors.

Mr. Alan Mackinnon, director and stage manager, did better than any of his company. *Strafford* is no easy play to mount. There are groupings and elaborate handlings of ambitious numbers without end. All this, and a goodly allowance of stage business, the invention of which no doubt fell to his arduous lot, showed skill and ingenuity. Scenes there were full of dramatic meaning and suggestion, attitudes, movements, clever graduation of effects, all speaking volumes for the care of this practical coach. And nothing could well have been better than costumes and scenery, painted by Mr. Hall from designs by Mr. Tadema, a lofty level of picturesqueness being here attained. This interesting departure from the rocky paths of purely classic drama will be doubly fruitful, if it point the way toward literary plays that never have been tried. It would no doubt be something of a drop from *Æschylus* and *Sophocles* and *Browning* to *Stevenson* and *Austin*, but on the lower ground the stage could be directly benefited, and that should surely be the end and aim of all acting, amateur or not.



Our Omnibus=Box.

PUBLIUS TERENCE AFER, ESQ.

20th March, 1890.

MY DEAR TERENCE,—

A young person I know told me the other day that Henry I. of England died of a surfeit of *palfreys*. This set me thinking (why?) of the villa near Puteoli, facing the blue Tyrrhene sea, where the secret of thy literary co-partnership with Lælius and the young Scipio formed many a jesting theme for conversation, maybe, over twinkling bumpers of Setian wine, heady enough to wash the throat clean through those long, strong revels of gluttony that hailed the fat Ambracian kid, and dropsical apple-snail, and perhaps the rich *lamprey* from distant Britain as rare *bon-bouches*. How we can picture the flushed cheeks and the fair chaplets of roses reeling over drunken brows, as the balmy wind steals in by way of fluted pillar and tessellated pavement, and cools its bosom against the tinkling fountain in the *peristyle*, and venturing further, flies again, let us hope, from the hot, lascivious atmosphere of the *triclinium*, to sob itself pure in the arms of Naples Bay. For the air of Puteoli villa was not good for the least of Nature's chameleons, and the quips and quiddities that went round at its orgies would have proved strong meat, perhaps, even for a Lovelace. Ah, me! the merciless luxuries—which podgy Gibbon preferred to call refinements—of those ancient days! the heathen indulgence and brutal pursuit! the prurient beast in his exotic palace, and the helpless Miriam writhing in her shame, or poor Nest from her northern eyrie standing with the blue of the sea in her eyes and death in her heart! I can have no sympathy with you here, Terence—now less than ever, for I have lately been to see “Clarissa” at our own little “Vaudeville,” and the cleansing fever of repentance is burning in me still. Lovelace! he was a Bayard to you all. If you would have chuckled richly over his fiendish intriguing, you would have sneered proportionately at his remorse; no dew of pity ever nourished green germs in your breasts. The tears of wretchedness fell thereon like rain on asphalt, finding no interstices to woo a single wandering seed. I can fancy sweet Clarissa done to moral death in thy outrageous Rome, and no poignard for her betrayer's bosom, and, worse, no angel's comfort kissing her to her own young decline. Is not thine unhappy ghost, “blown along a wandering wind,” hounded ever on now remorselessly by the harpy presentments of such piteous, yellow-haired slaves from over the water as thou and thy kind so often and so cruelly wronged? I hear, methinks, a shadowy chuckle in the hollow of the sky! “Not from thy hand, libertine, this stone to our memories!” Alas! who am I to cast blame! Did not I once woo Billy Waghorn's sister from the arms of Joe Pringle with lure of “brandy-snaps” cunningly warmed in the breeches pocket to the consistency of toffee? I mind me also of Mary Earwaker, of the New Cut, formed for man to “waste his whole heart in one kiss upon her perfect lips,” but whom, nevertheless, I abandoned for that she developed a plebeian stye in one of her gem-like orbs. These things do not bear dwelling upon in the ecstasy of my late bitter reformation. For I have seen “Clarissa,” and am humbled. And who is Clarissa? you will ask. Ah! that I can tell you. She is Winifred Emery and no other, and Winifred Emery is Clarissa. Surely all is said here. But whose the play? say you, the cunning adaptor of old. Ah, Terence! she belongs to no play, but to fact. And yet was her piteous ladyship introduced to the too-little-thinking life of to-day by one who can run even you close in your peculiar line, my “dimidiate Menander.” Buchanan the playwright is not uniformly true to his finer instincts; the author of “White Rose and Red” is not always to be depended upon for such a little thing as grammar; but Buchanan the adaptor has no equal in extracting the germ of beauty and truth from a bog of verbiage and prolixity. Prurience! I tell you never was play of pimps and harlots more

pronounced and less indelicate. As old Richardson set his heroine *in extenso*, so has his latter-day interpreter *in nuce*—a jewel in a dunghill. A diamond never glitters as it does on black velvet; the darker the evil horrors surrounding, but never overwhelming, the outraged girl, the fairer her soul shines forth in contrast. It is a picture that most may weep over and all appreciate. We may find our eyes wet as the curtain falls, without shame; we may acknowledge the influence wrought in our natures and justify it in our after lives with no loss of manliness. Call it a play if you will; I, for one, shall always think of Winifred Emery as Clarissa, and whatever parts she may essay hereafter—and the Gods grant they may be many—the image of that dying heroine will colour and sanctify them all.

Yours distantly,
(*Particularly so at present*),
THE CALL-BOY.

On Saturday, March 15th, Mr. George Alexander appeared at the Avenue, the theatre now under his management, as Dr. William Brown, in Mr. Hamilton Aïdè's most amusing comedy, "Dr. Bill." The young manager was warmly received, and honestly earned the plaudits bestowed on his performance throughout the evening, for he was bright, mercurial, and spirited, and made the most of the funny situations. The remainder of the cast is the same as on the opening night, and every member of it contributes to the unmistakable go of the piece. As a *lever de rideau*, a one-act comedietta by W. R. Walkes, entitled "Miss Cinderella," was produced for the first time. It is not by any means a good piece, but was accepted without murmur. It enabled Mr. Nutcombe Gould to appear to advantage as Mr. Wriothesley, F.R.S., an old gentleman whose thoughts are constantly fixed on the origin of the jelly fish and other strange denizens of the deep. He has been dragooned into a second marriage with a most objectionable lady, who makes a Cinderella of his daughter Margery, in order to advance the interests of her own child Hester, the spiteful sister of the fairy tale. But her plottings come to nought, for Margery's charms have secured her a lover in Lord Raemore, the handsome young prince that the artful mother hoped she had hooked for her fair but disagreeable daughter. Miss Laura Graves played Margery with considerable charm and ingenuousness; Mr. Benjamin Webster was Lord Raemore; Mrs. Leston, Mrs. Wriothesley; and Miss Lillie, young Hester.

Old Drury was crammed from floor to ceiling on the morning of Monday, March 17th, when the use of the theatre was generously given by Mr. Augustus Harris for the annual benefit of the Royal General Theatrical Fund. The stewards and Mr. Charles J. Davies, the secretary, had enlisted the aid of members of all the best known theatres. Thus we had the first act of "Dr. Bill" from the Avenue; the Shaftesbury was represented by Mr. Willard (Captain Howard Leslie) and Mrs. Willard (Luce Arundel), Mr. Herbert Waring (Charles Arundel), and Miss Ambruster (maid-servant), in "My Aunt's Advice," and excellently it was played. Mr. Irving, Mr. Bancroft, and Mr. Stirling, from the Lyceum, appeared in the duel scene from "The Dead Heart." Miss Ellen Farren and Mr. Fred Leslie, from the Gaiety, gave their amusing songs and dances in "Ruy Blas and the Blasé Roué." From the St. James's came Mrs. Langtry, who was seen to advantage in the fourth act of "'Tiswixt Axe and Crown," as the Princess Elizabeth, supported by Mr. Matthew Brodie (Sir John Harrington), Miss Amy McNeil (Isabel), Mr. Louis Calvert (Gardiner), Miss Marion Lea (Cicely), Mr. Walter Gay (Sir J. Brydger), and owing to the indisposition of Mr. Frank K. Cooper (for whose absence Mr. Harris apologised), Mr. Arthur Bouchier appeared as Courtenay. A selection from "Jack and the Beanstalk" brought the Drury Lane contingent to the front, and a scene from "The Ballad Monger" was capitally given by Mr. and Mrs. Beerbohm Tree and the Haymarket company. Besides these, Mr. James Fernandez recited "Bessie and I," and Miss Genevieve Ward "Christmas Eve." Mr. Ben Davies, representing the Lyric, sang "The Star of Bethlehem," and Mr. Harry Monkhouse and Miss Phyllis Broughton, of the Prince of Wales's, created much amusement in a little "dramatic eccentricity" entitled "Waiting." Mr. Arthur Roberts was droll in his imitations of well-known music-hall celebrities. There were a few other items in the programme, which

was begun at one o'clock, and was not concluded at 6.30. £500 was realised from the sale of tickets, independently of the donations for private boxes, etc., which will considerably swell the amount.

Mr. Ben Davies (the second portrait we give in this number) who is now appearing with such complete success at the Lyric Theatre, was born at Swansea, and came to London in 1879. In that year he entered the Royal Academy of Music, and, during his three years' study gained the bronze, silver and gold medals, the prize for declamatory singing, and was elected an Associate. Mr. Davies joined the Carl Rosa Opera Company in 1882, and made his first appearance as Thadeus in "The Bohemian Girl" at Her Majesty's Theatre, remaining with the company till 1885, during which time he filled with yearly increasing reputation all the principal tenor rôles. He rejoined the Carl Rosa Company for the London season, 1886. He then enlisted under Mr. H. J. Leslie's banner, and appeared as Geoffrey Wilder in Dorothy in 1887, as Martin Bolder in "Doris," and is now playing Ralph Rodney in the "Red Hussar." Of these later triumphs there is but little occasion to speak, as there is but one opinion as to their reality.

For Easter we are promised some novelties. At the Haymarket we are to have Mr. Sydney Grundy's five-act drama, "The Parish Priest," with Mr. Tree in the title-rôle, and with strong parts for Mr. Fernandez and Mr. Fred Terry. Mrs. Tree, Miss Rose Leclercq, and Miss Norreys, are also well fitted. In Mr. Arthur Law's new play at the Shaftesbury, entitled "Dick Venables," Mr. E. S. Willard will return to his old line of character, and impersonate the title-rôle, a convict escaped from Dartmoor. Miss Olga Brandon joins the company to appear as his wife, and Mr. Alfred Bishop has a strong character part.

At the Grand Theatre, Islington, on March 3rd, was revived W. G. Wills' "The Man o' Airlie," originally produced at the Princess's, July 20th, 1867, and reproduced at the Haymarket in 1876. It is a somewhat lachrymose play, turning on the sorrows of James Harebell, a poet of the Burns type, who, deceived by the falseness of a friend, and harrowed by the loss of his wife, is supposed to drown himself, but really wanders forth into the world a harmless imbecile, returning after some twenty years to die at the foot of the statue that has been erected in appreciation of his merits as a poet and a man of genius. It, however, affords Mr. Hermann Vezin an excellent opportunity for the display of his remarkable powers, but the excess of the Scotch dialect, which is almost incomprehensible to general audiences, will prove a bar to "The Man o' Airlie" ever taking any great hold on Southern audiences. Mr. Vezin's pupils Miss Olive Stettith, who is taking out the company, showed great promise as Mary Harebell.

Madame Sara Palma (whose portrait we give), is of American extraction, and though not possessed of very great histrionic power, made the part of Delia in Tito Mattei's "La Prima Donna" a success, when the opera was produced at the Avenue in October last.

In consequence of Mr. George Alexander's appearance at his own theatre, the part of Frank Granville, the hero in "London Day by Day," was on Saturday, March 15th, assumed by Mr. Frank Cooper. The Messrs. Gatti will have no occasion to regret the long engagement they have entered into with this clever actor, judging from the pathos, force, and incisiveness he displayed, and the very favourable reception accorded him. Miss Alma Murray, though still suffering from the shock attendant on an accident, played with much tender grace.

The pictures in the exhibitions now open may be taken as of more than average merit. The French Gallery is specially noticable for the works of Fritz Von Uhde and Max Liebermann, and will amply repay a visit. Messrs. Tooth's Gallery has an excellent example by P. Joanowitz, two clever dog pictures by Briton Riviere, some good work by Joseph Neuhays, *vide* "A Grey Morning;" F. Del Campo and J. Discart Eastern scenes; Edwin Hayes a seascape; David Farquharson "A Frosty Morning in Midlothian," and Alfred de Breanski, "Cader Idris, sunset," besides several others worthy of notice. At Mr. Thomas

McLean's gallery, J. Villegas sends "The Church of St. John and St. Paul," G. Jacquet a "Recollection of Watteau," E. Hartmann a clever picture "A Summer Frolic," and G. Bluernfiend a striking view of a procession in Jaffa. Mr. Orchardson, Mr. Godman, Mr. Harmaloff and Mr. Waterlow are also well represented. Anyone wishing to view some of the best works of Michel, J. M. Swan, Maris, Corot, Roybet, Decamps, Diaz, Troyon, Rousseau and other well-known artists should visit Messrs. Dowdeswell's Gallery. It is impossible in the space at command to notice such a large exhibition as that of the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours; we must therefore confine ourselves to saying that a more stringent "weeding-out" process has been enforced, that there are few pictures but that show promise, and the collection contains besides those by artists of acknowledged merit very many drawings that denote a certain future for their executants.

A very excellent portrait of Miss Alma Murray as Beatrice Cenci has been painted by Mr. Alfred Lys Baldry, and is on view at his studio, 34 Comeragh Road, West Kensington. The likeness is a striking one, the figure is easily and naturally posed, and the execution worthy of the subject.

New plays produced and important revivals in London, from February 18, 1890, to March 20, 1890.

(*Revivals are marked thus**).

- Feb. 21 "All Abroad," one act operetta by Arthur Law, music by A. J. Caldicott. Prince of Wales's.
- „ 22 "A Pair of Spectacles," three act comedy, adapted by Sydney Grundy, from the French of Labiche and Delacour (*Les Petits O'ssaur*). Garrick.
- „ 22 "Dream Faces," one act dramatic fancy by Wynn Miller (in evening bill). Garrick.
- „ 24* "As You Like It," Shakespeares's Comedy. St James's.
- Mar. 3* "The Man o' Airlie," play in four acts by W. G. Wills. Grand.
- „ 5 "Meadow Sweet," one act comedy by "Terra Cotta" (Miss Prevost). Vaudeville.
- „ 6* "Hamlet," tragedy by William Shakespeare. Globe.
- „ 10 "A Double Dose," farce by Arthur Shirley. Surrey.
- „ 11 "The Favourite of the King," new and historical play in four acts by F. S. Boas and Jocelyn Brandon. *Matinée*. Comedy.
- „ 15 "Miss Cinderella," comedietta in one act by W. R. Walkes. Avenue.
- „ 19 "Guinevere, or Love Laughs at Law," comedy opera in two acts, written by Stanley Stevens, music composed by Henry T. Pringner, Mus. Doc. Oxon. Kilburn Town Hall.
- „ 20 "Miss Tomboy," comedy in three acts by Robert Buchanan. *Matinée*. Vaudeville.

In the Provinces from February 18, 1890, to March 14, 1890.

- Feb. 20 "Our Great Surprise," one act play by Harry Blyth. T. R., Glasgow.
- „ 21 "Idols of the Heart," original "Idyllic" play, by Miss Janette Steer. Shakespeare Theatre, Liverpool.
- „ 21 "Pim-Pom," one act farcical musical piece, by E. T. De Banzie. Princess's Theatre, Glasgow.
- „ 21 "The Broken Coupling," one act "musical raillery of the rails," by J. A. Moonie. Waterloo Rooms, Edinburgh.
- „ 25 "The Battle Through Life," four act drama by W. H. Mitchell. (Copyright purposes). T. R., Barnsley.
- Mar. 1 "Queer Lodgers," farce in one act, by Alfred A. Wilmot. Park Town Hall, Battersea.
- „ 3 "Fair Play," drama in three acts, by Charles Crozier and Percy Milton. Morton's Theatre, Greenwich.
- „ 6* "Fra Diavolo," burlesque, by Henry J. Byron. Guard's Burlesque Company, Chelsea Barracks.
- „ 7 "A Clever Capture," new comedietta by Mark Melford. T. R., York.
- „ 8 "The Rope Merchant," new and original farce, by Mark Melford. T. R., York.

- Mar. 10 "A Woman's Love," drama in four acts, by Fred. W. Bird. T. R., Woolwich.
 „ 11 "Daisy Land," new and original play in three acts, by H. Graham. Greenwich Hall.
 „ 14 "A Fair Equestrienne; or, The Circus Rider," one act musical comedietta (from the German) by Haslingden Russell. Prince's Theatre, Bristol.

In Paris from February 11, 1890, to March 12, 1890.

- Feb. 14 "Le Drapeau," spectacular drama in five acts by Emile Moreau and Ernest Dépré. Ambigu.
 „ 14 "L'Entr'acte," operetta by Maxime Boucheron, music by André Martinet. Menus-Plaisirs.
 „ 20 "La Course aux Jupons," three act comedy by Léon Gandillot. Dejazet.
 „ 22 "Paris Fin-de-Siècle," four act play by Ernest Blum and Raoul Toché. Gymnase.
 „ 26 "Grandmère," three act comedy by Georges Ancey. Odéon.
 „ 27 "Feu Toupinel," comedy in three acts by Alexandre Bisson. Vaudeville.
 „ 27 "Madame Durosé," one act comedy by MM. Bisson and Mars. Vaudeville.
 Mar 1 "Superbe Occasion," Vaudeville in three acts by MM. Busnach and Debrit. Cluny.
 „ 3 "Monsieur Betsy," four act comedy by Oscar Méténier and Paul Alexis. Variétés.
 „ 6 "Amour," drama in three parts and four scenes by Léon Henique. Odéon.
 „ 10 "Le Mariage de Barillon," three act comedy vaudeville by Georges Feydeau and Maurice Desvallières. Renaissance.
 „ 12 "Camille," one act comedy by Philippe Gille. Français.
 „ 12^e "Les Originaux," one act comedy by Fagan. Français.



Reviews.

"*Æsop Redivivus*," By Mary Boyle. (London: Field & Tuer).

This is a collection of burlesque fables, not witty or especially funny, and the odd old-world cuts (pleasantly laughable in themselves) used to illustrate them, do not add to the joke in the connection, and are, generally speaking, quite inappropriate. The idea is a very stale one, and has been better worked upon.

"*The Story of Bradshaw's Guide*," By Percy Fitzgerald. (Same Publishers).

Mr. Fitzgerald has expanded an article he contributed some little while ago to the *Cornhill Magazine* on the history of "Bradshaw," and issued it in pamphlet form, excellently printed and produced. In it he gives the story of the guide, in terse, pleasant style, from the date of its modest christening to that of its present dropsical manhood, and illuminates his brief record with side-lights of information that are all interesting. An hour's journey may be pleasantly accomplished over this true railway-traveller's tract.

"*Costumes of the Modern Stage*," Edited by M. Mobisson, Secretary of the Direction of the Opera, Paris, and containing plates coloured by hand. (London: John C. Nimmo).

We have received from Mr. Nimmo five parts of the above work, of which twenty-four are to be issued annually (if the idea receives encouragement), each containing four plates. Undoubtedly the idea should receive encourage-

ment, for it is an excellent idea in its way and supplies a want which, if not precisely long-felt, is at least a growingly assertive one. For now that glaring anachronisms have been drummed off the boards, the stage costumier works with a cunning, knowledgeable, and unfettered hand, that studies to reproduce the past to the dint in a button, and takes a prominent lead—more particularly in Paris than in London—in directing the fashions of the present. Therefore we wish every success to the venture, and trust only that the promoters thereof may meet with such a measure of it as may enable them to later improve upon the original conception and the style of their illustrations. At present these are little else than fashion-plates in effect, though a few are of greater artistic merit than the rest. But what are we to say of a wide-breasted lady, dressed absurdly to represent a balloon, being presented to us as a type of the modern stage? She surely is not typical of any period but that of the burlesque fantastic, which belongs to no and every age. The historical dignity of the work should not suffer her intrusion. Its rather grandiloquent preface suggests no hint that in Part II. we shall alight on her bonelessly posturing, and it is something a shock to us to find ourselves suddenly facing her simper and her specious bust. But that is *en passant*. Very probably the designers of the work are feeling their way, and will enlarge their ideas as they advance. Indeed the later plates are better than the first, and in time no doubt the periodical will be worked up into what it already promises to be, a valuable and comprehensive history of the stage from that period which was marked by a fuller recognition of the fact that the theatre is one of the very best and pleasantest of pasturages for historians, archæologists, and—modistes.

"*The Queen of the Black Hand*," by Hugh Coleman Davidson. (London: Trischler & Co).

"*The Queen of the Black Hand*" is a very forward and objectionable young lady, who accepts commissions to "stick" comparative strangers with a *non-chalance* unworthy of her sex. Nor when she naturally falls in love with her destined victim, does she much improve matters by foregoing her task at the expense of the blue-eyed Eric's legitimate sweetheart, whom she most iniquitously routs and replaces. She has the excuse, it is true, of that unlimited power which the high-chosen of the Black Hand apparently enjoy; and it is not to be wondered at, perhaps, that she should occasionally be tempted to exercise a little arbitrary despotism, seeing that the dark influence of her terrible society radiates balefully, not only through the entire city of Almirez, but out and beyond to distant climes. Moreover, she has seen her father's head roll across the floor apart from his body, and this makes her do naughty things. So she merrily pursues her profane course through revolutions and bull-fights and plagues of cholera, until eventually, seized with an unaccountable desire to expiate her peccadilloes, she offers herself a sacrifice on the altar of melodrama, and being at a misqued ball mistaken for the legitimate sweetheart, who also lies under the ban of that gory society, is stabbed incontinently and dies amongst some flower pots.



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Sims, G. R.	July, 1884	Venne, Miss Lottie	June, 1889
Standing, Herbert	November, 1883	Vezin, Hermann	July, 1883
Stephens, Mr. Yorke	July, 1886	Wadman, Miss	October, 1888
Stirling, Mrs.	June, 1883	Waller, Mr. Lewis	April, 1887
Tempest, Miss Marie	July, 1888	Wallis, M ss.	January, 1889
Terriss, Miss Ellaline	May, 1889	Ward, Mr. E. D.	April, "
Terriss, Mr. Wm.	June, 1883—January, 1885	Warden, Miss Florence	July, 1885
Terry, Miss Ellen	July, 1883	Warner, Mr. Charles	December, "
*Terry, Miss Marion	February, 1883—July, 1889	Watson, Mr. Alfred	April, 1886
Terry, Miss Minnie	November, "	West, Miss Florence	September, 1885
Thomas, Mr. Brandon	March, 1887	Willard, F. S.	August, 1883—March, 1888
Thomas, Mr. Moy	July, 1885	Williams, Arthur	May, 1888
Thompson, Miss Lydia	January, 1886	Wood, Mrs. John	December, 1888
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



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Miss MARION LEA AND Mr. JOHN HARE.

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"His grave is dug, and his epitaph set up!"

—THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD.

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REJECT IMITATIONS.

THE THEATRE.



Herman Merivale.

BY WILLIAM DAVENPORT ADAMS.



THE announcement that Mr. Irving will re-open the Lyceum in the autumn with an adaptation of "The Bride of Lammermoor," by Herman Merivale—a work of which some public mention was first made some eight or nine years ago—has naturally excited the liveliest curiosity among theatre-goers. New plays are not frequent at the Lyceum—partly because Mr. Irving is fortunate in having long "runs" for his productions, and partly because, happily for the playgoer, he has devoted himself so largely to the illustration of the Shakespearean drama. When, therefore, we are promised at our leading theatre a new production from the pen of a living author, that author necessarily becomes an object, not only of congratulation, but of special interest. The event may properly be regarded as crowning his career as a dramatist. To have one of his creations embodied by Mr. Irving, when our chief actor is in the fullness of his powers, is a distinction for which any contemporary playwright may well be envied.

The time seems appropriate, at any rate, for a review of the work which Mr. Merivale has already done for the stage. Of recent years he has been best known as a collaborator with his wife in a couple of comic dramas written for Mr. Toole; and the public memory is nowadays so treacherous that there are probably very many for whom Mr. Merivale's ablest achievements are at the present moment little more than names. Our younger playgoers, moreover, may be grateful to anyone who shall put before them, in chronological order, some account of the dramatic pieces with which Mr. Merivale has successively—and, in general, successfully—tempted fortune. I do not propose to supply an elaborate critical estimate of this writer's theatrical productions: that has already been done by Mr. William Archer, and therefore does not require doing again. But a brief *resumé* of Mr. Merivale's long connection with the stage may have, perhaps, the timeliness and the utility I have suggested.

The first dramatic piece by Mr. Merivale of which I can find record

was the one-act comedietta, called "Six Months Ago," produced at the Olympic in July, 1867. It was a slight little play, with only three characters in it, and having to do with nothing more serious than the boredom of a newly-married man. But it was prettily played by Miss Milly Palmer (Mrs. Bandmann) and by the late H. J. Montagu and John Clayton, and might be depended upon to amuse even the exigent audiences of to-day. Later in the same year came yet another little comedy in one act, "He's a Lunatic," founded on "Le Fou d'en Face," and brought out at the new Queen's in Long Acre, with John Clayton as March Hare, the lively young artist who, pretending to be demented, does so in so irresistible a fashion as to win the widow whom he wants. This is one of the very best of drawing-room farces, and always popular with those who see it.

Having thus tried his literary wings, Mr. Merivale now prepared for a higher and more important flight, which was duly made by him in 1868, in collaboration with the late Palgrave Simpson. With that accomplished playwright he was destined to be associated on other occasions. In this first instance, the writers combined to produce an "original romantic drama," to which they gave the name of "Time and the Hour," and which first saw the light at the Queen's Theatre in June of the year named. It had all the assistance that a good cast could give to it. Alfred Wigan, W. H. Stephens, Gaston Murray, John Clayton, Mr. Toole, Mr. Lionel Brough, Nelly Moore, and Miss Henrietta Hodson (Mrs. Labouchere), played the chief parts, and played them admirably. The result was success at the time; but the play, interesting as it was and is, did not make any permanent impression upon the public. It served, however, the purpose of nerving Mr. Merivale for his first important single-handed effort as a dramatist—the production of his "Son of the Soil," an adaptation of "Le Lion Amoureux" of Ponsard. This was brought out in September, 1872, at the Old Court Theatre, of which Miss Marie Litton was then the manageress. In the interval the author had matured his powers and style. The two comediettas had been full of bright and polished talk. "Time and the Hour" had had some vigorous dialogue. In "A Son of the Soil" Mr. Merivale set forth a romantic story with all the attractions of strong and nervous diction, a large proportion of which took the form of sonorous but flexible blank verse. Here, again, the play was lucky in its exponents. Mr. Hermann Vezin was the low-born hero, Henry Martel, and Miss Ada Dyas the aristocratic heroine, Beatrice; while other parts were undertaken by the late W. J. Hill and Clifford Cooper, Mr. Alfred Bishop and Miss Emma Barnett. Here, too, the immediate result was triumph; and, in truth, the drama has in it so much that is strong and impressive that one wonders why, in these days of fondness for Revolution plays, it has not been resuscitated.

In his next effort Mr. Merivale had again the aid of Palgrave Simpson, and the outcome of their labours was once more seen at the Court Theatre (1873). It was a comedy drama in three acts—"Alone"—setting forth the estrangement of a father from his daughter, who

returns to her home under an assumed name, and contrives in the end to convince her parent, now become blind, that he has been wrong in his treatment of her. Mr. George Rignold was the father, and Miss O'Berne the daughter, while subsidiary rôles were undertaken by Clifford Cooper, Mr. Alfred Bishop, Mr. Edgar Bruce, and Miss Litton herself. There is no need to describe a piece which is in the present repertory of the stage, and we may pass on to Mr. Merivale's next production—an equally well-known comedietta called "A Husband in Clover," adapted from "Un Mari dans du Coton," and performed at the Lyceum in December, 1873, with John Clayton and Miss Virginia Francis (Bateman), now Mrs. Edward Compton, in the rôles of husband and wife.

In the following year our author made what was, perhaps, the most ambitious attempt of his theatrical career. He essayed to interest the play-going class in a four-act poetical tragedy, "The White Pilgrim," of which Mr. Gilbert a'Beckett had furnished the "legend." It was creditable to the theatre-patrons of the time that they gave to this finely conceived and admirably executed work so cordial a reception as they did. Purely fanciful in idea, and wholly imaginative in treatment, "The White Pilgrim" could scarcely, I fear, achieve popularity, even in these more intelligent and instructed days. However, it remains on record as at least a highly creditable endeavour to revive interest in the highest form of drama—an endeavour in which Mr. Merivale was once more well seconded by his interpreters, among whom were Mr. Rignold, Mr. Vezin, Mr. Bruce, Mr. Bishop, Miss Louise Moodie, Miss Rose Egan, and Miss Kate Phillips. The play, I may note, was brought out at the Court, which was also the original *habitat* of Mr. Merivale's adaptation of "Le Voyage de M. Perrichon"—"Peacock's Holiday," produced there in the same year as "The White Pilgrim," and thus happily illustrating the author's versatility. Other versions of "Le Voyage" have been witnessed on our stage, but "Peacock's Holiday," I venture to think, remains the best. It is broadly humorous, and yet never descends to vulgarity or horse-play. W. J. Hill—it may be recorded, for completeness sake—was the Peacock, Mrs. Clifford Cooper his wife, Miss Kate Phillips his errand boy, and Mr. Alfred Bishop the American general with whom Peacock comes into collision; while Mr. Edgar Bruce and Mr. Dalton Stone were the two rivals for the hand of Peacock's daughter.

We come now to the year 1875, in which Mr. Merivale, once more in collaboration with Palgrave Simpson, made what we may term the first great popular success of his life as a playwright. It was in that year that "All for Her" was first represented, the *locale* being the Mirror Theatre. The two authors had admittedly taken the idea of their hero from the Sydney Carton of Dickens; but, save for that, the play was wholly original, and the triumph it secured was assuredly well deserved. It is interesting to recall not only that John Clayton was the first Hugh Trevor—which every playgoer remembers—but that Miss Rose Coghlan was the first Lady Marsden,

Miss Caroline Hill the first Mary Rivers, and Horace Wigan the first Radford (villain of the piece). I have seen Lady Marsden admirably played by Miss Louise Moodie, and Radford realised with much intensity by Mr. William Mackintosh. Clayton, as everybody knows, was eminently affecting as Hugh Trevor—indeed, the part, in the hands of a competent actor, is certain to sway the sympathies of the public.

After this, Mr. Merivale remained inactive for three years, making his re-appearance in 1878 with a work wholly different from anything he had done before. This was “The Lady of Lyons Married and Settled”—a “vaudeville” he called it, but really a burlesque, written partly in prose and partly in verse. Mr. Archer speaks rather slightly of this effort, but I confess it seems to me to be much above the average of such things, and to have a permanent literary value. Claude Melnotte, in this piece, has developed into a student of Darwin and a maker of conundrums, with something more than a tendency to flirt with a pretty laundress, Babette. Pauline, jealous of the latter, flirts with “Beauseong,” but in the end the Melnottes (now called Morier) are reconciled. The burlesque contains a good deal of diverting satire at the expense of “The Lady of Lyons,” and, while the dialogue is full of quip and quiddity, the incidental lyrics are very much more neatly turned than are most of those we meet with in to-day’s travesties. Here, for example, are a few verses from Claude’s patter song in praise of Darwinism :—

Fast dying out are man’s later Appearances,
Cataclysmic Geologies gone ;
Now of Creation completed the clearance is,
Darwin alone you must anchor upon.

Primitive Life-Organisms were chemical,
“Busting” spontaneous under the sea ;
Purely subaqueous, panaquademical,
Was the original Crystal of Me.

I’m the Apostle of mighty Darwinity,
Stands for Divinity—sounds much the same ;
Apo-theistico-Pan-Asininity
Only can doubt whence the lot of us came.

Down on your knees, Superstition and Flunkeydom,
Won’t you accept such plain doctrines instead ?
What is so simple as primitive Monkeydom,
Born in the sea with a cold in its head ?

The new “Lady of Lyons” had the advantage of a very excellent cast. Mr. Edward Terry was the Claude, Miss Farren the Pauline, Mr. Royce the Beauseong, Mrs. Leigh the Dowager Morier, Miss Amalia the Babette, the late John Maclean the Damas, Mr. Squire the Deschappelles, Mr. Elton the Gaspar, and Mr. Fawcett the Graves. Such a combination of artists is rarely now seen in burlesque ; but in any case Mr. Merivale’s fun would, I fear, be too refined for the comprehension of the present-day masher.

After a five years’ interval, Mr. Merivale made the second big success of his career, this time in conjunction with Mr. F. C. Grove.

"Forget-Me-Not," produced at the Lyceum in August, 1879, has since made the tour of the world. For ten years it was the chief feature in the repertory of Miss Genevieve Ward, by whom the title character has been presented on more than one continent. It is unnecessary to dwell upon the merits of a drama so familiar. Suffice it that it is notable alike for its dramatic and its literary power, the dialogue being admirably terse and the situations in the highest sense dramatic. "Forget-Me-Not" was an instantaneous success, and it has been received with acclamation wherever played. Mr. Merivale was less lucky with his next two products, both of which confessedly owed their inspiration to the genius of Goethe. In "The Lord of the Manor." (Imperial Theatre, January, 1880), the dramatist desired, apparently, to modernise and Anglicise "Wilhelm Meister," while in "The Cynic" (Globe Theatre, January, 1882), he appeared to intend to do the same for "Faust." Indeed, "The Cynic," when originally brought out at Manchester in December, 1881, was entitled "The Modern Faust"—(when revived recently in the provinces by Miss Fortescue it received yet another christening). Mr. Merivale's aim was intelligible enough; the misfortune was that, practically, it could not be carried out. "Wilhelm Meister" and "Faust" cannot be modernised and Anglicised, and Mr. Merivale is not to blame for failing to bring about the impossible. In "The Lord of the Manor" the chief parts were played by Mr. Farren, Mr. Kyrle Bellew, Mr. Everill, and Miss Lydia Cowell; in "The Cynic," Mr. Vezin and Mr. Arthur Dacre resumed their original rôles, reinforced by Miss Litton and Miss Louise Willes. The former play, though excellently written, is, I am afraid, virtually dead. "The Cynic" will always provide Mr. Vezin with a powerful part, and Miss Litton's share in it will always be remembered by those who witnessed it.

There is not now much more to tell. Two years after the production of "The Cynic," Mr. Merivale published "Florien: A Tragedy in Five Acts, and other Poems." The tragedy, I believe, has never been performed. It is mainly in blank verse, and has much to recommend it to the cultivated reader. It might even be effective in representation. Will no one make the experiment? Among the "other poems" of the title are the lyrics (five in number) which Mr. Merivale wrote for Mr. John Coleman's adaptation of "Pericles." Here is a specimen of them—an invocation to Ceres:—

Goddess of the golden horn,
Plenty's Queen when man was born,
Hear us where we bend the knee
To thine high divinity.
Hear the infant's hungering cry,
Mothers' prayer no more deny:
Shed thy store o'er field and town,
Ceres, send thy blessing down.

Want and Woe stalk hand in hand
Through the parched and blighted land;
Poppies o'er the leaguered plain
Kiss to death the poisoned grain.

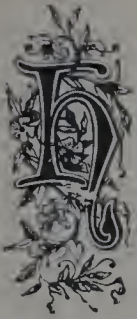
And the wavy sheaves of gold
Wither in their spectral fold :
Wear again thine harvest crown,
Ceres, send thy blessing down.

I have already referred to the two comic dramas, "The Butler" (1886) and "The Don" (1888), which Mr. Merivale wrote, with Mrs. Merivale, for Mr. Toole. How popular they were, and are likely to continue, I need not say. Mr. Toole was admirably fitted, the dialogue was full of fun, and the situations were genuinely mirth-provoking. In the interval between the production of these pieces—that is to say in June and in October, 1887—Mr. Merivale adapted "Mdlle. de Bressier" for Mrs. Brown-Potter under the title of "Civil War," and brought out (in collaboration with Mrs. Merivale), a drama called "Our Joan." Of these the first was a neatly-executed piece of work; the other had an interesting story, and has found acceptance in the provinces.

In the version of "The Bride of Lammermoor," Mr. Merivale's powers as a dramatist will no doubt be put to the severest test to which they have yet been subjected. The tale of Edgar and Lucy has an epic and a tragic strain, and he who essays to tell it on the stage in the year of grace 1890, and at the premier theatre in England, will have to run the gauntlet of stern criticism. The work, however, could hardly have fallen into better hands. Curiously enough, it was Mr. Merivale's old fellow-worker, Palgrave Simpson, who was responsible for the adaptation of Scott's novel done at the Lyceum twenty-five years ago. But Mr. Merivale has an imaginative and a literary power to which his friend could lay no claim, and which are yet indispensable to the adequate treatment of such a theme as "The Bride of Lammermoor." On the whole, there is every reason to believe that the new play will be well worthy of the dramatist to whom we owe "The White Pilgrim," and who in other works has shown so keen a sense not only of the "effective" but of the really dramatic.



“Missing.”



HE sold his art for a paltry gain and a passing popular praise,
He changed the green of her proffered wreath for a
measure of gilded bays,
He turned his steps from her constant paths to catch at a
cheap success,
And traffick'd with all her priceless gifts in the spirit of
business.

And we who had known his nobler self and echoed his words of
truth,
Who had caught the gleam of the greater star which beacon'd his
fervid youth,
Recorded another artist lost, another knee bent to gold,
One more rebuke of a genius sunk, one more high birthright sold.

Proud lifts the cross on the dome of Art and flashes along the time,
Where they whose homage is undeterr'd can rise to an aim sublime;
Their memories shall be monuments in the calendar of the brave,
And he shall be rich, as the world counts rich—but his name shall
sleep in his grave.

SHERWOOD.



The Function of Music in Social Regeneration.

BY ALLAN LAIDLAW.



VERY perfect work of art, it will be observed, in its degree is developed from a single germ, containing within itself that duality without which growth is impossible. The proper germ of a music-drama is a popular legend containing a story of two conflicting emotions. Only in this way can an interesting dramatic progression be developed; only so can musical phrases arise naturally and harmoniously out of a subject. I shall presently quote a passage from Winwood Reade's investigations which shows that emotions demanding melodic expression lie, not on the surface, but in the depths of our nature. It must here be noted that music has no real affinity with words. Music expresses deep emotion better than words. Music can hardly be tied to words; but it should be allied to the peculiar phase of emotion which gives rise to it. Thus Richard Wagner maintained that his music grew out of the subject matter of his poem, and he sought to convey as much of the verbal idea into the melodic phrasing as possible, and so he developed the dramatic element in music to a far more complex degree than any composer. But with the exception of certain national melodies which have become inseparably connected, by force of association, with certain words, almost any pathetic air will agree with any set of words describing or conveying a like phase of emotion. Words express ideas; melodies express emotions. The excellence both of speech and melody is measured by the degree of definiteness in their expression. When verbal expression, or musical expression, is indefinite, it becomes possible, as in a recent case, to set the music of one opera to the words of another—vague generality being the characteristic alike of weak speech, weak melodic sequence, and weak poetry. Yet there is a difference of degree in the possible definiteness of melodic and of verbal expression. Faust would not speak his love in the same words as Romeo would use; still, a love song of Gounod's Romeo would probably not be felt out of place, sung by Faust to Marguerite, because human emotion is less subtle than human character. A joyous young girl hums any melody she knows to express the joy she feels in her heart. Two different people, musically gifted, might express similar emotions in two quite different styles of melody. Mr. Winwood Reade may assist us to arrive at some solution of this phenomenon. He says:—

“What, then, is the secret of this power in music? And why

should certain sounds from wood and wire thus touch one's very heart strings to the core?

"It is the voice of nature which the great composers combine into harmony and melody; let us follow it downwards and downwards in her deep bosom and there we discover music, the speech of passion, of sentiment, and of love. There we discover the divine language in its elements; the sigh, the gasp, the melancholy moan, the plaintive note of supplication, the caressing murmur of maternal love, the cry of challenge or of triumph, the song of the lover as he serenades his mate."

Here may we not add that in the human race this is supplemented by the song of mirth? Of all beings in the universe, man alone, who suffers more intensely than all, truly laughs.

"The spirit of science arises from the habit of seeking food; the spirit of art arises from the habit of imitation, by which the young animal first learns to feed; the spirit of music arises from primeval speech, by means of which males and females are attracted to each other. But the true origin of these instincts cannot be ascertained; it is impossible to account for primary phenomena."

Surely from these facts it is not illogical to infer that only a nature in sympathy with the eternal universe can compose noble music, and we need no longer wonder that sordid natures, however gifted, can give forth only vulgar sequences. Also this explains to us why men and women of culture have found their keenest enjoyment in listening to great music, and have been unable to refrain from expressing their loathing of the so-called "popular" music. Can we any longer wonder at the domination of the Teutonic race in European politics? It is only the earnest and strong race that survives.

Our next consideration is the importance of healthy recreation. Any system of ethics which divorces the intellectual faculties from the sensual or animal faculties is a false one. True morality is the refining of the brute instincts into noble passions. Froude says:—"The enjoyments of the unreasoning part of us cannot be defended on grounds of reason, and experience shows that men who are all logic and morals and have nothing of the animal left in them are poor creatures after all." Rhythmical dancing to music is a most necessary and valuable recreation for the young—not so much the dancing of the modern ball-room, which is a languid and effete formality; but such free, vigorous, and independent action as one sees in the Irish jig, the Scotch reel, and the English hornpipe. The value of the ballet as a refined spectacle is not fully appreciated in this country. Mr. Stewart Headlam is quite right in his championship of this form of art. For the art of music is properly employed to aid and perfect that rhythmical motion of the body which forms a natural vent to joyous feeling. The art of dancing to truly rhythmical strains is at once healthy and refining. The contemplation of artistic dancing is soothing and resting to the overworked brain, and it is a spectacle which calls forth no intellectual

effort to comprehend. In the theatres devoted to drama or to comedy, our entertainment necessitates a degree of exerted intelligence. In the opera house we have a certain strain upon the emotional faculties; but the ballet of action presents an interesting and primitive form of art. Indeed, the eloquence of graceful and illustrative pantomime is marvellously direct. Herbert Spencer, in one of his suggestive essays, says:—"How truly language must be regarded as a hindrance to thought, though the necessary instrument of it, we shall clearly perceive on remembering the comparative force with which simple ideas are communicated by signs. To say, 'Leave the room,' is less expressive than to point to the door. Placing a finger on the lips is more forcible than whispering, 'Do not speak.' A beck of the hand is better than 'Come here.' No phrase can convey the idea of surprise so vividly as opening the eyes and raising the eyebrows. A shrug of the shoulders would lose much by translation into words." The finest specimen of ballet ever seen in England was the representation of "Excelsior" given a few years since at Her Majesty's Theatre; a marvellous example of the perfection to which the Italians have brought the drama of dance and action. The contemplation of a pantomime exercises the emotions pleasantly, and educates the eye by the passing view of beautiful forms, colours, and graceful actions. Indeed, in the purely musical drama, either of action or of song, the sympathetic emotions are delicately called into play; for as action is often more eloquent than words, similarly, a strain of expressive melody will suggest an emotional idea more powerfully than a declamatory speech. The first eight bars of *Salve Dimora* give us a more intense notion of Faust's passion of Love than the best spoken love speech would effect. The contemplation of poetic fancies or humourous extravagance is always healthy, provided there are in them form, beauty, and meaning. The story of a ballet should always be left in the hands of a dramatist, or literary artist, with poetic faculty. To leave the designing of a ballet in the hands of the average dancing-master is about as reasonable as to expect the average actor to write a play worth acting. Dulness or didacticism are equally hateful in the theatre, or in any art; but the entertainments of a morally healthy people, will always be beautiful, harmonious and sensible. The worst feature of popular English stupidity and French vileness, is the satisfaction evinced in the doings of the blackguard type of comic singer, and the indecencies of the *café chantant* vocalist. Pleasure is what all human beings have a right to enjoy, provided their pursuit of it be unattended with cruelty, and their enjoyment of it unselfish. The following passage from Herbert Spencer is well worthy of consideration in this connection:—"Who that has lived thirty years in the world has not discovered that pleasure is coy, and must not be too directly pursued, but must be caught unawares. An air heard by chance may give more pleasure than an elaborate concert, a picture in a dealer's window than a whole exhibition. The more we multiply and complicate appliances of pleasure, the more certain are we to drive it away."

We may, I think, state it as a fact that wherever is found low and brutal pleasure, we shall find vulgar music. It is no reproach to refined art that it has often been employed for the delectation of the vicious, for it must be remembered that refined emotions cannot control or repress evil habits previously confirmed or inherited. Tainted blood is more powerful than intellect or moral sense ; and in the diseased nature and darkened mind, no wave of tender emotion, no gleaming ray of goodness is ever possible. We can venture to lay down an axiom of the ethical philosophy of the future ; it is, that the faculty of sympathy must develop with intellectual culture if mankind are to rise in moral dignity. We have to face the fact that the old creeds are tumbling into dust, old faiths are vanishing, eluding the grasp of men, like mists that fly before the rising sun over the broad Lincolnshire fens. No exoteric influences of terror or superstition have got rid of the proclivity to evil, and it is the proclivity to evil that must be eradicated from Humanity, for, as the great Celsus wrote hundreds of years ago :—"When persons with a proclivity to evil have formed evil habits, they are notoriously past cure ; neither punishment nor tenderness will mend them." Thousands of broken-hearted parents, distracted husbands and weeping wives, have experienced the eternal truth of this great fact in ethical philosophy. The preaching of atonement and repentance, in such cases, is for the most part pure cant and effete sentimentalism. There is a *moral leprosy*, equally incurable with the physical.

Music has the strongest affinity with the passion of love ; and the purity of vocalisation is in some degree synonymous with purity of morals. I speak now, not of conventional morality, which is often defective morality, but morality which is obedience to the highest natural law. The culture of music softens the character, induces tenderness, and produces that calmness of demeanour and gentleness of voice which are always the indications of a refined nature. There is no delight in life so keen as association with people who have soft voices and graceful manners ; then one experiences that electrical current of reciprocal sympathies which renders existence a keen enjoyment. To a truly happy and perfect nature sympathy is more valuable than wealth or worldly success. Wisdom is the strength of life, sympathy its happiness, and love its rapture. Herbert Spencer says :—"In its bearings upon human happiness we believe that this emotional language which musical culture develops and refines is only second in importance to the language of the intellect ; perhaps not even second to it." We say certainly *not* second ; because a human being must develop as a whole proportionately. Exclusive culture of the intellect produces a self-centred egotism likely to end in a cold-hearted indifference, a severe asceticism of thought and feeling which not only result in injustice and bigotry, but recoil upon the philosopher in that terrible loneliness of the intellect which has been too much the lot of the learned in all ages. Any form of aggressive egotism is essentially vicious. In Altruism only can we rightly fulfil the purposes of our existence. The curious on this

question will find subject for thought in Letter 190 of "The Correspondence of Wagner and Liszt;" vol. 2. Hueffer's translation.

Referring to the moral effect of gentle voices, Spencer says :—"For these modifications of voice produced by feelings are the means of exciting like feelings in others. Joined with gestures and expressions of face they give life to the otherwise dead words in which intellect utters its ideas; and so enable the hearer not only to *understand* the state of mind they accompany, but to *partake* of that state." Debauched people, whose better feelings are undeveloped, or blunted by self-imposed suffering, have always discordant voices. If we bear in mind how much our direct gratifications are intensified by sympathy, that is, by sharing them with another, we must appreciate the *value* of sympathy and understand the importance of an art which tends to sharpen the sympathetic faculties.

It is true that the first duty of life is happiness; but happiness can *never* be found in frivolous excitement, selfishness, luxury, or sensuality. Perfect happiness is found only in love, and all that springs from love—love of one woman; love strong and steadfast; love of children; love of blood-ties; love of friendship in trust and loyalty; love of sympathy with our fellows. These degrees of love are all expressed most perfectly in music, and through music they can be intensified; but it must be the intensification of vital growth. Emotions can never conquer bad habits.* Great artists have led bad lives because of the evil habits engrained in their blood, which are stronger than the thoughts of their intellect, or the emotions of their hearts.

There is a true Hell more awful than the Hell of Dante. It is the inevitable law of hereditary transmission. The Tophet of the human race is Retrogression. The promised land is the Law of Progress. This is the true, sure Hope. If we are not always striving after moral beauty, purity, and cleanliness, we must descend into the outer darkness of ignorance and moral turpitude. The law of necessity compels that we may live. The law of progress demands that we shall live *well*. We are certain about what we can know. Of the unknowable it is useless to assert, puerile to be garrulous. For the feebleness of pretence can lead only to destruction. Just as if we do not individually keep our bodies in cleanliness we become subject to serious epidemics, so unless we be always doing our best and thinking our highest and feeling our keenest, we become failures, we miss our happiness, the golden opportunities are gone never to be had again. Our life has been a discord; it might have been a melody. The one certainty of our lives is that we shall die. It is equally certain that while we live, through whatever fate or tangled web of circumstances we pass, duty must be done. Fail in that, we are false to ourselves and a certain curse

*On this subject will be found an interesting passage in *Chalmers* relative to the effect of an oratorio on a bad man.

to our posterity. For nothing is more certain than that, "The evil that men do lives after them." Man must improve himself. He will find music his greatest aid. For may we not with perfect truth liken the life of a man to a melody which he has to play? Surely he should sound his notes with the truest harmony he may; thus he shall perchance find some pleasant sound of it for his own delight. What avails him to make it a harsh inferno of false intervals and unresolved chords? Let him sing true at least, for what chance shall he have to "join the choir invisible" if in this hard world of sad realities he tends to produce only such a state of things as Shelley so truly describes in "The Revolt of Islam;"—

"For they all pined in bondage; body and soul,
 Tyrant and slave, victim and torturer bent
 Before one power, to which supreme control
 Over their will by their own weakness lent
 Made all its many names omnipotent.
All symbols of things evil; all divine;
 And hymns of blood or mockery which rent
 The air from all its fanes, did intertwine
 Imposture's impious toils, round each *discordant* shrine."



Our Prima Donna.

BY ERIC LEWIS.



THINK we all loved her. I'm sure I did. "We" were a small travelling opera company, numbering perhaps fifteen members when all told, viz., soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone, basso, low comedian (myself), and about six ladies and gentlemen in the chorus.

The manager, who was our conductor as well, was the husband of our contralto, and a most genial and kind-hearted couple they were. We did our own packing.

If the theatre we were at had an orchestra, we made use of it; if not, our conductor did it all himself; and I am bound to say our show generally went better when it was so.

He was a clever fellow. It was most amusing to watch him when doing all the work himself. He would have a piano and a harmonium arranged in an angle, playing them alternately and occasionally both together. Then he would work a kind of triangle with his foot, beat time, turn over his music, and—as he knew our repertory backwards—prompt as well.

As I have said before, I was the low comedian of the company, playing such parts as "Alessio," "Tristram," "Lord Allcash," etc.

I almost felt out of my element when I first joined the company—years ago now—as I couldn't sing a note ; or at least if I did it was very badly.

As for being comic !—well ! There isn't much comicality about my face, except my nose, which is very long, thin, and pointed, most useful for theatrical purposes.

In fact, I'm generally known amongst ourselves as "Old Nosey." But there ! I don't mind their chaff. We were a happy set, and should have been thoroughly contented had we done better business.

We never stayed longer than a week, at most, in one place ; as a rule only two or three days. Our repertory consisted of "Faust," "Il Trovatore," "Martha," "La Sonnambula," "Fra Diavolo," and "Maritana."

I used to play the "Marquis" in the last piece. It was considered the best thing I did. At any rate the pit and gallery used to laugh most, except when I played "Ruiz" in "Trovatore." Then I am bound to admit they laughed more than ever, but that was sarcastic-like.

I only played the part to oblige the management, and save the expense of another man. I suppose I must have looked precious droll, especially when I led on Leonora, all in black, in the prison scene.

You know the part. It goes :—

"Behold then ! in that dread tower now lie the prisoners of state, quite hopeless. He, too, unhappy, whom thou so lovest."

Lord ! how the house would roar when I came to that part. The music was too high for me, and my voice invariably cracked when I came to the "HE."

Why it even made Leonora laugh sometimes.

It seems as if I am drifting away from my subject, so I'll stick to the point and tell you about our *prima donna*.

Well, when the company was forming for this particular tour, the rehearsals were pretty well forward, when our principal soprano fell ill, and had to throw up her engagement. Our conductor was at his wits' end. Everybody seemed to be engaged, so what to do he didn't know.

He sent letters and telegrams all over the place, besides advertising in the *Era* and other dramatic papers.

We used to rehearse at the back of a music shop leading out of Oxford Street. A dingy old place it was, but, being central, it suited our purpose.

We naturally got uneasy, for, without a *prima donna*, our show would fall through, and our engagements be cancelled, which would have been very serious for some of us, as it was just before Christmas, when managers have, as a rule, no vacancies. One morning we were all present at the music shop, eager for news, when in came our conductor and his wife, looking unusually bright and cheerful, even for them. God bless 'em !

"It's all right," said he. "I've found a substitute—a good one, too. She came to my house yesterday in answer to my *Era* advertisement. She's a novice, but she's well up in our works."

You can imagine how our spirits rose at this good news, and how anxiously we waited to see what our new *prima donna* was like. It seems that, although English, she had spent most of her life in Italy.

Her father—an officer on half-pay, whose pension died with him—had gone to live over there, determined to give his only child a thoroughly good musical education—about the only thing he could give her—and, as she had always had a great inclination for the operatic stage, had done his best to help her.

Well, well. "Man proposes, but God disposes," as they say. Her father died—her mother had died in giving her birth we afterwards found out; so, in order to continue her studies, she gave English lessons and copied out music for her own master, with whom she went to live.

She was then at Milan, and her greatest ambition was to sing at the big opera house there, La Scala, I believe they call it. All her plans were frustrated, for she happened to meet a young Englishman. He was a civil engineer, and had been sent out by his firm in England to superintend some big works they had on hand close by there. It was the old story, I suppose. They met, fell in love—who could help doing so with her?—and just before he left Italy, were married. For one happy year her life was all sunshine. They settled in England, but after twelve months he died.

Died before he could see his boy, who was born a fortnight afterwards.

Her husband's firm gave her fifty pounds, and that was all she had.

For days her life was despaired of, whilst her boy throve famously.

At last she got better, and seemed to live only for the child.

All this happened four years ago, and for four long years she had managed to keep her head above water by teaching music. She had no friends, having lived so long abroad, and was entirely dependent on her own exertions. The husband's relatives had never noticed her. The struggle was almost too much, when, quite by chance, she happened to see our advertisement in the *Era*. As a last resource, she answered it in person, and was engaged. Of course it was a risky thing having a novice for principal soprano, but then we were in such a fix, and our conductor, being an excellent judge, soon found out that, vocally speaking, she was all right; the only doubt was as to how she could act.

She knew all our works except "Fra Diavolo," and, as luck would have it, was pretty fresh with them too, for her only amusement had been her piano, which she had managed to preserve for teaching purposes. That was her story, and deeply interested we were with it, I can assure you. Presently she came in. A fair-haired woman about the average height, with one of the sweetest, purest faces I have ever beheld. She looked about twenty, but was three or four years older.

We all fell in love with her at once, even the ladies, which is a pretty good test, I think. She was a bit timid at first, as was only natural, but our good-natured manager soon put her at ease with us all, and introduced everybody.

I remember when he came to me he said, "This is old Nosey, a very dear friend." Then she laughed, such a sweet silvery laugh that we were friends immediately. We set to work, and for her benefit we had an acting rehearsal.

She seemed well up in the music, and had a fair idea of the business. A trifle amateurish, perhaps, but that was only to be expected. Besides, her voice made up for all deficiencies in acting. Moreover, you never can judge from rehearsals as to what an actor is capable of.

We had arranged to commence our tour with "La Sonnambula," as we always did. So we rehearsed that, and, as we only had a week before starting, we met again the following day, went through another work, and her bits of "Sonnambula" again. This time she brought her boy with her. A dear little chap he was, about four years old, as like his mother as one pea is to another. He seemed to take to me at once, and sat on my knee all rehearsal as good as gold. He really was a sweet little man, so good-tempered and amiable and full of fun; but it grieved me to see how delicate he seemed to be; so fragile that you could almost have blown him away.

The week soon passed, and on December 24th we commenced our tour. We were going south. We opened in a cathedral town on Boxing-night. As a rule, I've found cathedral towns bad for business; but I like them. There's such an air of rest and quiet about them which suits me, as I'm not so young as I was. Then I love the grand old cathedrals. Being a bit of an antiquarian, in a small way, I generally wander about them between rehearsals and dinner. I forgot to say that our new *prima donna's* name was Mrs. Lloyd, but as that didn't sound quite the thing for the bills, we had to invent a name for her. As she was to make her first appearance in "Sonnambula," we announced her as "Madame Amina."

I remember I found her some quiet inexpensive rooms over a baker's shop close to the theatre.

We had a full rehearsal on Boxing Day, and at night called for her to take her to the theatre. I don't exactly know how it was, but somehow I always did so. Lord bless you, there was no harm in it; I was old enough to be her father, almost her grandfather.

She used to put the boy to bed before leaving. Sometimes she would ask me to come upstairs to say "Good-night" to the child. What a pretty sight it was to see him in his little white gown, with his golden curls, just like his mother's, falling on his shoulders.

He'd put his tiny arms round my old neck and kiss me, and say: "Good-night, Nosey dear." Perhaps if we had time I would have a game with him, a bolster fight or something of the sort, and make an old fool of myself.

Sometimes I would hear him say his prayers to his mother, re-





MISS MARION LEA.

“He doth lack
“Of going back
“Little, whose will
“Doth urge him to run wrong or to stand still.”

—BEN JONSON.

peating them after her in his pretty baby-English, winding up with "God bless mother and all kind friends, and pussy and dear old Nosey!" Ah! that's all past.

I shan't forget our first performance. She was quite ill before going on with nervousness. Whilst waiting at the wings for her first cue, I could see her holding on to the scenery for support.

Well, she appeared, and got a regular reception, looking so sweet in her pretty peasant's dress. She somewhat staggered at first, but soon recovered.

After the first act she got a "call," and that gave her more encouragement than anything. She quite lost herself in the character. Her beautiful voice rang through the building, fairly astonishing us all. In the last act she quite held her audience, especially in that last grand scena. Why you might have heard a pin drop. At the end of the opera she had a double "call." Then we all crowded round her, shaking hands and congratulating her. The women kissed her, and I think the men would have liked to have done so too.

Our manager and his wife told her her fortune was made, and there we all were wishing one another "Merry Christmasses," "Happy New Years," "Many happy returns of the days," and I don't know what besides.

I saw her home. There we found her landlady with her husband—they had both been to see us—waiting for her. Then nothing would do but we must all come upstairs to drink her health and the boy's.

Well, our tour progressed, and in due time she appeared in all our operas.

She was, of course, better in some than others. For instance, she was hardly strong enough for "Faust" or "Trovatore," but still they were pleasing performances.

We had been travelling about four weeks, and had only two more towns on our list. Business was wretchedly bad. So bad, in fact, that we became a "commonwealth." For one thing, the weather was dead against us. Rain and sleet, rain and sleet, every day. To make matters worse, the poor little chap fell ill; not bad enough to keep in one room, but low-spirited and feeble—a bad sign in children. He even didn't care about coming to rehearsals, which he was so fond of doing. We all loved to see him at the wings, as quiet as a mouse, playing with some of the properties maybe, or having a romp with some of the gentlemen of the chorus, when they were not wanted. No, he seemed listless, liked to stay at home with the landlady, helping her in his way, or playing with the cat by the kitchen fire. What did him so much harm was our constant travelling. Although we used to wrap him up so that we could hardly see him, yet he caught a cold, which settled on his chest.

That was a trying time for his mother, and no mistake. You see, poor thing, she was obliged to sing at night and leave him, as we had no understudies in our little troupe.

We finished our performance at one town on the Saturday night, and as it was a nasty cross-country journey to the next place, we were obliged to travel all Sunday. Oh! how I hate those Sunday journeys! I never saw such a day, nor felt the cold so much. As it happened, I knew of some nice rooms, so wrote beforehand to secure them for Mrs. Lloyd and Guy.

We arrived 'about eight o'clock in the evening, thoroughly tired and exhausted.

The little room looked doubly cheerful with tea ready and a bright fire blazing away. I felt quite pleased I had thought of it. I went round first thing in the morning to enquire after the boy. I saw him and my heart quite sank. I felt we shouldn't have him with us much longer.

We opened at night with, as usual, "*La Sonnambula*." We didn't rehearse, for it was hardly worth while. There was no orchestra, and we were all pretty well perfect in our parts by that time.

The manager and I just went down to see that all was arranged and in order. The weather was awful. I quite expected a shocking house, but it cleared up a bit by night, and it proved better than I anticipated. I gave the little servant at Mrs. Lloyd's rooms a trifle to let us know during the performance now and then how the child was.

Well, the opera began, and a dull affair it was. The audience became gradually more and more apathetic. Whether it was on account of the weather or us, I don't know.

The first and second acts passed almost without a hand.

At length we came to the last act. You may remember that this is the famous bridge scene, where Elvino and the rest are sceptical as to Anima's innocence when found asleep in the Count's bed in the preceding act, and how the Count tries to convince them, and how at last she does it herself by walking over the bridge asleep.

We often used to have jokes about that bridge. At some places it would be about a foot off the ground only, where there was not the slightest possible chance of her hurting herself, even if she had fallen off; at others it would be simply a deal table covered with green baize, and so on. But at this particular theatre—curse it!—it was almost at the top of the building. It had been used for some melodramatic piece before we came. Very effective from the front, I dare say, but precious nasty for a sleep-walking scene, I can tell you. I don't know how it happened—nobody ever does in these cases—but no one had looked after the scene-shifters. I was talking to the servant until I had to go on, who had come with the latest bulletin from Guy, saying he was no better, worse if anything. Our conductor was talking to his wife till he had to take his place in the orchestra.

The head carpenter was at some adjacent public; consequently the men were left entirely to themselves.

Well, we came to that part where the Count tells us to "Behold Heaven's proof of her innocence," and where we all fall down on our knees, according to custom.

I always thought she looked better in this dress—which of course is, or ought to be, a night-dress—than in any other. I fancy I can see her now in her close-fitting, long white wrapper, with hanging sleeves, showing the beautiful arms and all her golden hair falling far below her waist.

She never “made up” much, but this night she had on hardly any paint at all. Poor soul, she hadn’t the heart for it.

Hearing her cue, she came on the bridge, and moved slowly forwards, when—oh! God, I shall never forget it—there was a crash, a scream, and the whole thing toppled over and came down. “Drop the curtain!” someone shouted, which was immediately done. Our conductor jumped on the stage, and when he had ascertained the sad particulars, explained to the audience, who slowly and sorrowfully departed. As for me, I was the first to rush for her. I found her senseless with a nasty cut on her head, from which the blood was slowly oozing. But that was not all. We tried to move her to her dressing-room, but the pain awoke her to consciousness, for she moaned and begged to be left where she was, so we pulled her bed on the stage. It had been used in the second act, and was standing at the wings. A doctor had, of course, been sent for. When he arrived, he examined her, shook his head, and said he could do nothing for her. He told us she was injured internally and fatally, and could not last many minutes.

It seemed that the bridge had not been properly supported. It had not been seen to since last using, and literally broke beneath her weight.

Never shall I forget that scene—all the company on the stage in their fancy dresses, which seemed sadly out of place; the women crying, aye, the men too, and she lying on that little bed in her white robe with her beautiful hair floating round her.

Whilst moving her on to the bed she fainted again, and remained insensible for ten or fifteen minutes.

Presently I heard the stage-door bang, and someone enquiring for me.

I went out and found not the servant, but her mistress. Seeing me she said, “Oh, sir! he’s gone, he’s gone. The dear child died in my arms about five minutes ago. He got a bit better, and then before I could send for anyone he went off quite quiet, poor lamb, just heaving a little sigh.”

Whether it was the draught of air or our talking which disturbed her, I don’t know, but the poor sufferer opened her eyes and tried to put out her hand, while scarcely above a whisper came the words, “What is it?—Guy? Tell me!” I trembled for the result, but I needn’t have done so, for when I told her a sweet smile broke over her face, and she said, “Thank God! it’s better so, it’s better so.” Turning to the weeping women who stood by her she said, “Don’t cry, it’s much better as it is. I couldn’t live without my boy, nor he without me. Besides, we shall join my dear husband and never be parted again.”

She asked me then to kiss her. I did so, and her last words were,
 "God bless you, Nosey !"

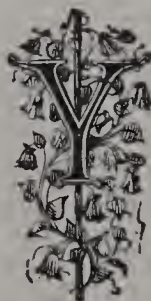
Then those two pure spirits, not separated even in death, passed
 away into that unknown world where

"The wicked cease from troubling
 And the weary are at rest."

They were buried in the same coffin. All the company followed
 as mourners, and sincere mourners, too. I have retired from the
 stage now, having had a small competency left me. As I sit by my
 fireside in my native town, stirring events happen both at home and
 abroad, but nothing will ever erase from my mind the memory of
 our "Prima Donna."



Almond Flowers.



E dainty first-born of the year,
 Fair outriders of Spring,
 That tempt the sun-beams out, and here
 The cuckoo's welcome bring ;
 That make Hope's clustering curls so dear
 With your sweet garlanding ;

Bright blushes on the virgin cheek
 Of pretty, bashful day,
 Why bloom ye but a little week,
 Then pass and fade away ?
 Oh, wither not ! for life is bleak,
 And joys so soon decay.

Ye have the glory of the sky,
 Undimmed by veiling leaf,
 Ye have the love of men, then why
 Make ye a stay so brief ?
 Oh, darlings formed so prettily
 To hide the lines of grief !

Alas, they go ! Too pure to keep
 In world so bitter cold,
 With closed eyes they lie asleep
 In the dim days of old,

While o'er the void like memories creep
The tender leaves of gold.


Farewell ! oh, when again ye bloom,
What griefs will Time have made ?
The empty place, the haunted tomb
Whereon he whets his blade ;
The chilling of young hearts, the doom
Of hope too long delayed.

Fade, melt away like rosy snow,
Or dreams upon the light !
We are too hand in hand with woe
To weep upon your flight ;
So many griefs we daily know,
And bury ere the night.



The Degeneracy of Dramatic Criticism.

BY A. J. D.

ORD BEACONSFIELD, always a severe student of human nature and a philosopher whose utterances were at times tinged with a theatrical cynicism, defined a critic as one who having attempted many things and failed to attain distinction in any of them, sought consolation by sitting in judgment on the works of those of his fellows who had, either by superior industry or greater talents, succeeded in reaching that goal which he had been fated to miss. This definition, conceived doubtless in one of the great statesman's most cynical moods, makes up in sarcasm what it lacks in truth. To say that a critic is one who turns to criticism as a last resource is manifestly absurd. Schlegel has defined criticism as an art which demands for its proper performance a high degree of intelligence, wide attainments and culture, and the ability to mentally weigh and analyse with a clear mind and unbiassed judgment the component parts of a subject in order to arrive at a just and proper appreciation of its worth and value as a whole. True as this undoubtedly is of criticism as applied to literature, it is especially true as regards the drama. To express a clear, concise, and well-defined opinion of a play seems, regarded superficially, an easy enough task and one that falls well

within the capacity of anyone gifted with a pair of eyes and a head fairly well provided with what Anthony Trollope, in one of his novels, appropriately termed "A complete set of intellectual works, jewelled in two places."

This idea, fundamentally false and erroneous, is responsible for the many abuses which exist in the world of dramatic criticism of to-day, abuses which, if left to flourish unchecked, are calculated not only to exert a distinctly baneful effect on the dramatic profession, but to cause the public to regard the criticism of the theatre and those connected with it, first, with contempt, and later on, with disgust.

There can be little doubt, indeed, that a vulgar flippancy of tone is gradually creeping into dramatic criticism, and that instead of regarding the theatre from an intellectual point of view, it is rapidly becoming the fashion on the part of many of those who are supposed to guide and direct public opinion, to look upon and treat the playhouse merely as a comfortable lounge for passing an hour or two, for pleasantly digesting a heavy dinner, for meeting one's friends, or for killing time and *ennui*. To regard it in any other light would be to "bore" the public. It would seem indeed as if this haunting fear of "boring" the playgoer is exerting a distinct effect in directions other than that of dramatic criticism.

Our theatrical managers are one by one devoting their energies to the production of plays of a light, farcical character, chiefly adaptations from the French, only a few, bolder and more enterprising than the rest, venturing to place their stages at the disposal of native dramatists for the production of works of serious interest.

The modern race of critics following suit, no longer, as in the days of John Oxenford and his contemporaries, favour us with carefully written dramatic essays, interesting without being pedantic, literary without being stiffly Academic, but content themselves in their reports of "first nights" with jocular references to the actors and actresses engaged, descriptions of their dresses and personal appearance, and jottings about the well-known people seated in the auditorium.

The average dramatic *critique* of to-day scarcely deserves that literary designation. It is more often than not merely a notice of a performance, a notice, couched in bad English, and when not personally spiteful or unduly eulogistic, dull and commonplace to a degree. It is becoming more and more evident that dramatic criticism is being used mainly as a vehicle for the display of personal animosity towards an author, a player, or a manager, or for a little friendly "log-rolling." The literary merits of a play are neglected, its points are slurred over, and the efforts of those taking part in it are wilfully misconstrued. Indeed, everything is sacrificed to a few weak jokes, a cutting phrase or two, and a verbal assagai aimed at the personality of someone connected with the entertainment which is made the avowed subject of the so-called *critique*. The private lives of actors and actresses are dragged forward and

exposed to the public gaze and ridicule, though such matters have no bearing upon the artistic efforts of those who are thus mercilessly pilloried. The introduction of this personal element into modern criticisms is one of the features most to be deplored. It is a matter for sincere congratulation that thus far this reprehensible practice has not crept into the more important papers, not that the style of criticism which one finds in some of these journals is altogether beyond reproach.

There is a happy medium between deadly dulness and "smart" vulgarity which is not always successfully attained. Perhaps it is to this that the introduction of the new style is attributable. The public, weary of the stereotyped phrases and the unoriginal opinions of the dull, jog-trot critics, of their lack of animation, and of the narrowness and monotony which characterize their views of the stage, have perforce accepted, for want of a better substitute, the silly vapourings of those papers which have associated themselves with the advanced style of criticism.

Charles Reade, full of rage at his failure as a dramatist, called the public a pack of idiots. In so doing he fell into as great an error as did the French general who cursed his soldiers for losing a battle. The soldiers might have truthfully replied that they only obeyed the orders of their officers. In much the same way public opinion is guided and directed by the critics. It is arrant nonsense to declare that dramatic criticism is of no value nowadays, and so it is of no importance how it is written. True, indeed, that, as an historical record of the contemporary drama, it is in nine cases out of ten so much waste paper, but its influence, so far as the public of to-day is concerned, cannot for a moment be gainsaid, and managers, actors, and all interested pecuniarily in the stage are ever ready to admit as much. The new style if permitted to spread, will sooner or later sap that influence and drag down criticism to the degraded level to which it has already sunk in some parts of the United States, where columns of personalities of the most scurrilous type are eagerly read and pass for dramatic criticism. It must not be forgotten that the great mass of the public is intelligent and requires something more substantial than literary garbage of this sort, nor does it care for public displays of bad temper and private spite. Only a very insignificant and worthless minority possesses a liking for these things.

It is a regrettable feature that the responsible post of critic should in so many cases have fallen into the hands of persons, not only ignorant of all but the most superficial surroundings of the stage, but absolutely indifferent to its welfare. It is to these new-comers, these superficial *flâneurs*, that the degeneracy of dramatic criticism is primarily due.

To turn back to the reviews published some twenty years ago, is to learn the dramatic history of that period written in the form of brief essays by men who had made the stage the study of their lives, and who regarded it seriously and studiously. It is true that the scholarly and sometimes too carefully finished style

which suited the public in the past would not fall in with the taste of the present touch-and-go generation, but there is a middle course to be steered, a course combining the careful thought of the past with the vivid descriptive style and picturesque word-painting which this active age approves. We do not want erudite ponderosity or Grub Street flippancy. The former wearies the public; the latter disgusts them. There are fortunately in our midst some critics who discern what the public of to-day require and who supply their wants, but their number is small. Would that it were larger. We could then regard with equanimity the feeble efforts of the new generation of "smart" critics to prostitute the theatre, consoled by the cheering thought that they were battling against a force superior to them in intellect and years, and metaphorically holding in their hands the confidence of the public and the respect of the theatrical profession.



Our Play=Box.

"MISS TOMBOY."

Comedy in three acts, by ROBERT BUCHANAN (founded on Sir John Vanbrugh's famous comedy, "The Relapse.")

First produced at the Vaudeville Theatre, Thursday afternoon, March 20, 1890.

Lord Foppington ..	Mr. THOMAS THORNE.	Mendlegs	Mr. J. CHRINGTON.
Tom Fashion	Mr. FRANK GILLMORE.	Glitter	Mr. S. FREEMAN.
Sir George Matcham..	Mr. J. T. BLYTH.	Hyac	Mr. HARBURY.
Sir Tunbelly Clumsy	Mr. FRED. THORNE.	Coates	Mr. S. LAWRENCE.
Squre Ditch	Mr. AUSTIN.	Tierce	Mr. T. WALTERS.
Lavarole	Mr. O. YORKE.	Miss Fanny Hoyden	Miss WINIFRED EMERY.
Lory	Mr. CYRIL MAUDE.	Mrs. Sentry	Miss SILVIA HODSON.
Jabez	Mr. WHEATMAN.	Nancy Ditch	Miss HANBURY.
Jacob	Mr. RAMSEY.	Dolly Primrose.. ..	Miss COLLETTE.
Rev. Mr. Quiverwit..	Mr. F. GROVE.		

Sir John Vanbrugh's "The Relapse, or Virtue in Danger," is announced in a life of the author as "being the Sequel of 'The Fool in Fashion,'" and was first played at Drury Lane in 1696 with Cibber as Lord Foppington—the Sir George Matcham of the present play was then called Coupler. An adaptation of the play was made by the actor Lee, and under the title of "The Man of Quality" was produced at Covent Garden in 1773, and in 1777 Richard Brinsley Sheridan formed on it another play entitled "A Trip to Scarborough," which was acted in that year at Drury Lane. In 1846 "The Relapse," was played at the Olympic with Mr. Walter Lacy as Lord Foppington, Mrs. Walter Lacy as Miss Hoyden, and Leigh Murray as Loveless. It was seen at the Strand in 1850. Mr. John Hollingshead's version, also named "The Man of Quality," was done at the Gaiety May 7, 1870, with Mr. Alfred Wigan as Lord Foppington, and Miss Nellie

Farren as Miss Hoyden, and the late John Maclean was Sir Tunbelly Clumsy—I think Mrs. Cross was the original Hoyden. Mrs. Jordan was also great in the part, and Mrs. Abington played the character in Sheridan's adaptation. Mr. Buchanan has done away completely with the objectionable characters, and the intrigue of Loveless and Berinthia. He says in a foot note "that the vein of heartlessness so characteristic of an artificial period has been abandoned altogether" (in this I scarce agree, witness the characters of Foppington and Tom Fashion), and has written almost entirely fresh dialogue. His very great improvement, however, is that he has transformed the vicious Miss Hoyden into a thoughtless, sunny, and impulsive "tomboy," who romps and kisses and owns to a sweetheart or two, but is guileless all the while. Of course, with the excision of the characters of Loveless and Berinthia goes "the relapse from virtue" on the former's part. The play now turns on the selfishness of Lord Foppington, who refuses his younger brother Tom Fashion any assistance. Tom's valet Lory, by spying and eavesdropping, discovers that a marriage has been arranged by Sir George Matcham, a professional "coupler," between my Lord and Miss Fanny Hoyden, a wealthy heiress of some seventeen summers. The prospective bridegroom is unknown to his intended spouse and her belongings, and so Lory suggests that his master shall steal a march on his brother, purloin the letter of introduction, and go down to Brambletree House, introduce himself as Lord Foppington, and win the bride. Fashion consents, arrives and is duly honoured by Sir Tunbelly Clumsy, Fanny's stepfather, as the peer he expected, and quickly wins the heart of the girl. Troubles come on him suddenly, for Lory intercepts a messenger announcing the speedy coming of the real Lord, Fashion puts a bold face on it and warns Clumsy that the man who is at hand is none other than young Fashion, who is trying to pass himself off as the nobleman. So when Lord Foppington appears, Sir Tunbelly determines to "roast" him, plays on him all manner of tricks, Fanny pretends to be insane, and the poor lord fancies he has got into a lunatic asylum. He is locked up in the strong room as an impostor, but is brought out to be confronted with Sir George Matcham, who soon proves his identity. In the meantime Tom Fashion has persuaded the parson, the Rev. Mr. Quiverwit, to marry him secretly to the very willing Fanny Hoyden, Tom first confessing to her who he really is; and when his imposture is discovered, he and his new-made wife throw themselves on Sir Tunbelly's mercy. As he finds that Lord Foppington would not consent to wed Fanny at any price (for there is a salutary doubt as to the legality of the marriage ceremony she has gone through), Sir Tunbelly forgives the young couple, and the curtain falls on a merry dance of Sir Roger de Coverley. The success of the piece was due to Miss Winifred Emery. No one, I am sure, gave her credit for the power to so naturally delineate the high spirit and mischief-loving fun of the "Tomboy," who loves kissing, but without any *arriere pensée* of harm or of there being anything unmaidenly in it. Hoydenish, full of antics and frolicsome she might be, but with it all she was a lady and a pure little maiden. Miss Emery has proved herself possessed of the highest comic powers. Mr. Frank Gillmore was also very successful as Tom Fashion; his aping of the manners of his vain coxcomb of a brother was excellent, and in his own proper character he was easy and yet full of a rollicking, happy-go-lucky temperament, but one in which the sense of chivalry was not forgotten. Mr. Tom Thorne

had caught the tone of the fop, whose only idea of greatness is to shine before the world of fashion, hold a levee of tradespeople whom he can bully, but whose excuses he will accept when they assure him that the garments are such as are worn by my lord this or the duke of that. Mr. Fred Thorne was good as the fox-hunting, hard-drinking country squire; Mr. Cyril Maude subtle as the valet Lory, and Mr. F. Grove did well as the sycophantic Rev. Mr. Quiverwit. I do not think that "Miss Tomboy" is the most cleverly written of Mr. Buchanan's plays, but he was called for at the end of the piece, which will be seen at a series of *matinees*, and would have a great chance of success in the evening bill were the first act played closer and the third act strengthened—rather a difficult thing to do after the excellence of the second.

"A VILLAGE PRIEST."

New play in Five Acts, by SYDNEY GRUNDY (suggested by the French play "Le Secret de la Terreuse.")

First produced at the Haymarket Theatre, Thursday Evening, April 3, 1890.

The Abbé Dubois ..	Mr. TREE.	Comtesse de Tremeillan	Miss ROSE LECLERCQ.
Jean Torquenie ..	Mr. FERNANDEZ.	Marguerite	Mrs. TREE.
Armand D'Arçay ..	Mr. FRED TERRY.	Jeanne Torquenie ..	Miss NORREYS.
Captain of Gendarmes	Mr. ALLAN.	Madeleine.. ..	Mrs. E. H. BROOKE.
Madame D'Arçay ..	Mrs. GASTON MURRAY.		

It is probable that there will be more discussion over Mr. Grundy's latest work than over any play that has been produced for some years—for he has set the thinking playgoers two problems to solve. The most important one is, Can it be right under any circumstances for a priest to betray the secret of the confessional? the other, Could so sternly just a young man be found, as Armand D'Arçay, who from a rigid sense of duty, separates himself from the girl he adores, brings to light the adultery of her mother, shatters the reputation of his own father whose memory he has always revered, and might, but for the generosity and self-sacrifice of the innocent man who has so suffered, crush the fond delusions of his own mother as to the probity, honour, and affection of her deceased husband. And the sad part of it is that the priest's betrayal of his sacred trust is to no purpose; the innocent man, out of gratitude to the woman who has sheltered his daughter, returns to finish his term of imprisonment; the lovers are separated, and the guilty woman's sin is made known to all but one. Yet Mr. Grundy has given us such noble sentiments, has drawn such grand characters, and put into their mouths such exquisite language, that the play cannot but interest and add to his reputation. The French play by MM. Busnach and Cauvin, from which "A Village Priest" is taken, has, as the author states, only "suggested" his work. It was played at the Chateau D'Eau, October 12, 1889, and in its French guise, a half-mad creature, La Terreuse, shoots down the seducer of her mistress to save her master's honour, and the judge to shield it descends to the meanness of so summing up against the innocent gamekeeper as to ensure his condemnation. In Mr. Grundy's play the judge D'Arçay is made a monster of baseness, he has carried on an intrigue with the Comtesse de Tremeillan, the wife of his greatest friend, he (presumably because the intrigue has been discovered) murders that friend, and then from the bench sentences the innocent gamekeeper Jean Torquenie as the murderer, pointing out as the motive that Jean had discovered that his wife had been faithless to

him with his master the Count. The judge is stricken down with paralysis on the day he has condemned Jean, and on his death-bed reveals the truth to the Abbé Dubois. This is all supposed to take place some years before the opening of the play. Then Jean has escaped from prison—having done so from a longing to see his child Jeanne—and he, not knowing who lives in a certain house, but only that it is the home of a rising young advocate, comes to beg of him to take up his cause and prove his innocence. Armand D'Arçay is at first indignant at the reflection cast upon the memory of his father, but Torquenie's earnestness impresses him; the idea that his upright father may have erred in judgment haunts him; he hunts up the law reports, catechizes the clerk of the court who was present, and at length by the mere accidental discovery of a cipher correspondence in an odd volume of "*The Vicar of Wakefield*," his father's character is revealed to him in a new and hateful light. This does not prevent his persistence in endeavouring to repair the evil, and clear the innocent man, though he knows it will part him from Marguerite. He taxes the Comtesse de Tremeillan with her past sin, and he goes to the Abbé to implore his help. He is certain the Abbé knows the truth from his goodness and his manner to Torquenie—he even entreats the priest to betray the secret of the confessional. His importunity, the pity for the convict, arouse a fearful struggle in the Abbé's breast. In the solitude of his chamber he wrestles with himself, until a ray of moonlight thrown upon the volume of *Holy Writ* decides him, he reads there that which he interprets as a voice from Heaven, and the next day he gives up his priestly office and utters the words that prove Torquenie's innocence. There can be no union between Armand and Marguerite, the future of the latter will be devoted to the comfort of her guilty but penitent mother. But what is to be the fate of Madame D'Arçay as a truly good and pure woman, whose one happiness in her blind state is the memory of the man whom she has worshipped as everything that is upright and pure? Is her short remainder of life to be one of unutterable misery? No, Jean Torquenie, in his nobility of soul prevents this, his character has been vindicated in the eyes of his child, who now loves him as much as, before she knew the truth, she shuddered at him—that child has been cared for by Madame D'Arçay, and so to save his daughter's benefactress, he returns to complete his sentence, and will let the world still believe him guilty. The character of the convict was grandly played by Mr. Fernandez, and the Abbé Dubois of Mr. Tree was the most perfect realization of a village priest, so kindly in all his dealings, so severe on himself and yet so touching in his miserable struggle, and so determined when he has discovered the path that he thinks he should take. Mr. Fred Terry's was also a very fine performance, so earnest, vivid, and natural. Mrs. Tree has never done anything so well as in the part of Marguerite, it was truly tender and human; and Miss Norreys was also admirable. The piece was exquisitely put on the stage; it is worth a visit if only to see the Abbé's garden with its blossoming apple tree and wealth of flowers, over the welfare of which their owner watches with such loving care.

“DICK VENABLES.”

New drama, in four acts, written by ARTHUR LAW.

First produced at the Shaftesbury Theatre, Saturday Evening, April 5, 1890.

Archdeacon Jellicoe ..	Mr. ALFRED BISHOP.	Dick Venables	Mr. WILLARD.
Doctor Paganstecher ..	Mr. E. W. GARDEN.	Mrs. Lisle.. ..	Miss OLGA BRANDON.
Peters	Mr. H. CANE.	Lady Harriet Jellicoe..	Mrs. CANNINGE.
Charles Kirby (Com-)	Mr. HENRY V	Helen Jellicoe	Miss ANNIE ROSE.
mander R.N. .. }	ESMOND.	Wilson	Miss ANNIE HILL.
Captain Lankester ..	Mr. ELWOOD.	Hornor	Miss GREME.
Clifford } ..	Mr. ROYSTON KEITH.	Liston	Miss BECKETT
Moriarty } Warders ..	Mr. E. W. THOMAS.		
Atkinson } ..	Mr. HUGH HARTING.		

Mr. Law's new play is one full of the most extraordinary coincidences and improbabilities, and though of course written with a view to afford scope for Mr. Willard to appear as a hardened, resolute, quick-witted criminal, does not give him, after all, a character in which he can shine as he has done in many other plays. Mrs. Lisle the heroine, has taken up her abode on the borders of Wildmoor, on which also the convict prison is established. Now this, one would imagine, would be the very last place she would have chosen for a residence, as she is no other than the wife of Dick Venables, a noted burglar, and, as she has led with him the most miserable of lives, anything that would recall him to her memory must be at least unpleasant. Venables is supposed to be dead, and so Mrs. Lisle is at liberty to accept the offer of Captain Lankester the newly appointed governor of the prison, who has never up to that time told his love, but who now opportunely appears. Just as inopportunely, almost immediately, Dick Venables turns up, in the midst of a hue and cry; he has escaped from Wildmoor, makes for Mrs. Lisle's, kills a warder who tries to capture him, and creeps into the house. He is, of course, delighted to find his wife; she is in mortal dread of him, and working on her fears, he makes her pass him off as her brother Charles Kirby, then absent with his ship. In this character, he boldly shakes hands with Captain Lankester, is introduced to Lady Jellicoe and her reverend husband, whose favourite pursuits appear to be birdnesting and pocketing everything he can lay his hands upon, in fact he is an amiable kleptomaniac, introduced to bring about the final catastrophe. Venable's identity is nearly discovered, however, and he has to exercise his greatest astuteness in keeping out of the way of Helen Jellicoe, for she is clandestinely engaged to the real Kirby and would at once betray the counterfeit. Then there is Dr. Paganstecher, a gentleman whose passion is keeping £50,000 worth of precious stones in a bureau, and who entrusts the secret of their whereabouts to Peters his valet—a man whom he has taken without a character, but on the faith of his “bumps,” for the Doctor is a devout believer in phrenology. Peters is a criminal and immediately recognizes Venables as a “pal,” and insists on *his* stealing the jewels, so that Peters may not be suspected, and they are to share the proceeds. Venables does steal the casket, and hides it in an old mill; the archdeacon, with his magpie propensities, watches him, and when he is gone carries off the treasure and takes it home to hide it under a laurel bush. All the characters are assembled in the garden at the Rectory, when Captain Lankester discovers from a photograph which the archdeacon has purloined, that the supposed Kirby is no other than Venables, but for Mrs. Lisle's sake promises not to betray him. Then the real Kirby suddenly arrives. Venables brazens it out at first and makes his wife *disown her brother*, but his identity is proved by Helen Jellicoe, and the climax is brought about by Peters, who thinking that Venables has taken the jewels and re-

sold them to their owner, without intending to divide the "swag," denounces his *quondam* associate. Venables rushes on his accomplice to stab him, but Peters is too quick for him and mortally wounds Venables, who dies in the arms of his ill-treated wife, for whom he does then show some human feeling, and at the same time chuckles that he has cheated the gallows. Miss Olga Brandon has made another advance in her profession, and can take rank as one of our best emotional actresses. Mr. Willard in a powerful and artistic manner displayed the innate savagery of the man with the devil-may-care hardihood of the self-possessed criminal. Miss Annie Rose was a very delightful *ingénue* and is thoroughly suited for this line of character. Mr. Alfred Bishop, Mr. Garden, and Mr. Cane were worthy of better parts.

"NIXIE."

New play in three acts, by Mrs. HODGSON BURNETT and Mr. STEPHEN TOWNSEND.

First produced at Terry's Theatre, Monday afternoon, April 7, 1890.

Bryan Lawrence	{ Mr. WILLIAM HERBERT.	Mrs. Belasys	Miss RUTH RUTLAND.
Basil Belasys	{ Mr. LEWIS WALLER.	Miss Maegregor	{ Miss CHARLOTTE MORLAND.
Doctor Armstead	{ Mr. WALTER RUSSELL.	Miss Pinch	{ Miss CAROLINE EWELL.
Bill Hutchens	{ Mr. JULIAN CROSS.	Mary	Miss GRACE ASTLE.
Blackett	{ Mr. FREDERICK KNIGHT.	Nixie	Miss LUCY WEBBLING.
Kitty	Miss HELEN FORSYTH.		

Starting with a fairly strong first act, "Nixie" dwindled away in interest, and the introduction of the incident of "Editha's Burglar" in the third completely destroyed any sympathy, from the absurdity of the reason which induces Bill Hutchens to attempt robbery. He has actually to force the window that he may leave it open for the easy entrance of the would-be seducer of Kitty, who is then to pose as her deliverer and so win her favor. To such a very precocious child of eight as Nixie is made to be, there must be danger in her being made cognisant of her mother's very strong *penchant* for the man who is not her husband, but who after doing his best to ruin her in the outset of her life, now tries to make her forget her wifely duties. Such a theme is not one that at least children should listen to, nor is it too agreeable to grown up people. Kitty is a silly doll-like creature, who elopes from her boarding school when only seventeen, with Basil Belasys. His being already married, proves that he can only have the worst designs on her, but she is saved by his being opportunely wounded by his revengeful wife, and the arrival of his mother to take him away and marry him to a rich heiress in England. Whether he contemplates bigamy is an undecided point. Kitty in her trouble writes to her middle-aged guardian Bryan Lawrence, who at once offers her marriage. Ten years elapse. She has the fondest of husbands, the sweetest child, but she is a sort of *Frou Frou*; she receives letters and grants interviews to Basil and is really only saved by Nixie, who is set to watch over her by Lawrence. The latter is called from home, and Basil employs Bill Hutchens to break into the house. Then there is the long interview between the burglar and Nixie, in which she offers him all her trinkets if he will promise to be quiet and not wake mamma, hands him all the plate, feasts him on rabbit pie and brandy, and just as he is going off, enter Basil, who makes him lay down all his plunder, giving him a £5 note to repay his lost opportunity, and then in the nick of time Lawrence returns and overhears a passionate declaration to his wife from her old enemy's.

lips. Nixie so works upon Basil's feelings that he gives up the pursuit, and Kitty discovers that she loves and has for years loved her husband with an absorbing passion, but has been afraid to let him know it! Miss Lucy Webling is a decidedly clever child actress, and can express emotion as well as talk in the sententious, almost deliberate, manner of the precocious angel of the household. Miss Helen Forsyth cleverly conveyed the impression in the first act that she was a very silly, frivolous creature, who needed the strong support of such a husband as Mr. William Herbert made Lawrence, a character that he played admirably. Mr. Lewis Waller as a most unmitigated scoundrel quite held the house. His was a wondrously powerful piece of acting. Mr. Julian Cross was amusing at the burglar Bill Hutchens, and Miss Charlotte Morland was good in a sort of Rosa Dartle character, spiteful and revengeful from her unrequited love for Basil. I do not think that "Nixie" will live as has Mrs. Hodgson Burnett's "Little Lord Fauntleroy."



Musical Silhouettes.

I.

THE POPULAR COMPOSER.



HERE is probably no single unit of the entire agglomeration of incongruous elements known as the world of music more absolutely self-satisfied than the Popular Composer. By this is meant not an inordinate appreciation of personal merit, nor the arrogance of conceit, but a sincere belief that at last by the world at large that merit is rightly recognised.

The Popular Composer has written a song, which is in itself an excuse for his self-satisfaction. Every publisher is writing to him, begging for a song bearing his name, and if possible some resemblance to his recent success. He feels that indeed he has sprung into the airy regions of Fame like a balloon, and is, perhaps, pardonably inflated.

He boasts of what he is making out of his songs, but swears that, be the inducement what it may, he will not write more than eight or ten a year. He sees his name in the *Daily Telegraph*, and is elated. His song is everywhere to be seen in the shop windows, and he is jubilant. Streets boys whistle, and barrel-organs play the refrain, arranged as a waltz, in company with several other melodies evolved out of the inner consciousness of the composer of the waltz, and he feels he is indeed a celebrity.

Odd as it may seem, it is not by any means his best song, though when he wrote it he had an intuitive artistic perception it would become popular. His best songs as yet are unwritten.

He is, or is not, a musician, but he is generally ignorant of theory and counterpoint, or, verily, he would not condescend to write ballads. Having written many songs, the Popular Composer writes an opera, which, if ever produced, is a ghastly failure.

By this time his great success is forgotten, and so is he. New seasons have brought new successes. He has yielded to the demands of publishers, and the needs of his pocket, and has written himself out. He has fathomed the depth of the well of his inspiration, if it was ever more than a bucket. Finally, he is cold-shouldered by the publisher, ignored by the public, and can say nothing bitter enough in the greed of the one and the ingratitude of the other.

Beyond this, who shall follow him? He fades into silence and obscurity, and when he dies, not even a musical paper notices the fact, unless he happens, as a last resource, to have taken up teaching,

in which case a "friend" supplies a paragraph, which is condensed and commiseratingly inserted.

His one song, which was once, perhaps, the greatest success of modern times, can be bought at a second-hand bookstall for twopence. Play it, and you will wonder what on earth made it a great success, and he over whom that earth has closed, a Popular Composer.

SEMIBREVE.



Our Musical-Box.

Pretty costumes and pretty faces and fair flowers galore at Miss Hope Temple's third annual concert on the 28th ult. at Steinway Hall, including the fair composer herself, in a dress that was a dream of heliotrope. Crowded was not the word for the place, neither was warm; and there were many for whom no seats could be found, who waited at the doors, like so many fashionably-dressed Peris at the gate of Paradise, and eventually went away disconsolate. First of all, I place Mr. Hayden Coffin, who sang as he always does, with feeling, though he had lost the last page of his song. Then Mr. Courtice Pounds, who sang exquisitely, and smiled all the way through his pathetic song; Mr. Oswald, who is an artist in every sense of the word, and Mr. Lawrence Kellie, who is as terribly affected as ever, and would sing better if he sang less maunderingly. Apologising to the ladies for giving them second place, Miss Geraldine Ulmar sang "An Old Garden" divinely, and Miss Damian's peculiar voice filled the little hall; Miss Ethel Davies, a youthful pupil and niece of Miss Temple's, recited "The Relief of Lucknow"—which everyone said was Savile Clarke's and wasn't—in a manner highly creditable to both, and with a power that promises the true actress one of these days. Then, let me see, M. Johannes Wolff played the violin conceitedly, but well; Mr. Herbert Standing imitated popular actors inimitably; Mr. W. H. Squire showed, for one so young, a mastery over the 'cello that will one day win him a name; Herr Schönberger played two dances by Brahm; and Miss Temple and Mr. J. D. Davies, a very clever young musician, mutually shared the task of accompanying. "Mary Grey," Miss Temple's very last new song, is simple, sympathetic, and like all her songs, full of true feeling, but Mr. Kellie sang it ever so much too slowly. It is not a funeral dirge, friend Lawrence, though you seemed to think so. Verily, there was a crush; and I was fairly among the Philistines, with a publisher each side of me. Yet I survive!

Emphatically I should not call Steinway Hall a good place to sing in. Very few halls are, because I am inclined to think they are built



MR. JOHN HARE.

"I would rather trust and be deceived than suspect and be mistaken."

—"A PAIR OF SPECTACLES."

first and acoustically considered afterwards, which is perhaps unwise. Prince's Hall may be better, but is painfully inartistic, with cold high walls and church windows that would depress even a self-opinionated tenor. In St. James' Hall, when you do not get a whiff of "*Bouquet de la cuisine*," you hear the vehement applause in the next hall. In a pianissimo passage, while you are listening to Neruda or Joachim with both ears, neither is eminently desirable. But I hear it is being remedied.

Now Mr. Wyndham has come home, perhaps he will infuse some improvement into the Criterion orchestra. It wants it sadly. Fortunately it is an old-fashioned one, and invisible! Now the orchestra at the Shaftesbury is admirable, though its conductor is nothing if not gesticulatory. That's a pardonable fault, though, for which I forgive Mr. Edward Jones at once, because he has a soul above the latest jingling gavotte, polka, and waltz. I hold it that the conductor of an orchestra should be actuated in his choice of music by the play being performed. How few are! Between the mirth-moving acts of a farcical comedy, let us have something bright and lively. Pathetic comedy—for example *Albery*, *Byron*, and *Robertson*—demands dreamy vales, melodies of "linked sweetness long drawn out," in sympathy with the story portrayed on the other side of the footlights. To drama of human interest, such as "*The Middleman*," is best fitted such of the semi-classic overtures as are playable. They are innumerable; but for melodrama, pure and undiluted melodrama, that is tragedy with a mask on her pale face, stately marches, grandeur, intensity, and declamation. I would suggest, too, that "*Clarissa*," and always "*The School for Scandal*" and "*She Stoops to Conquer*," and all the old world plays, should be performed to old world music, the minuet, gavotte, and saraband of the days when courtliness reigned and playhouses could have been numbered on the fingers of one's hand. Then, indeed, shall we wander back into the green fields of the past, and be brought not therefrom by the rude and horrid jarring of modern meretricity whensoever the curtain shuts from our gaze the scene of last century; and even go forth into the world to find it fresher, sweeter, fairer, and haply less weariful, than when we left it but a few hours ago.

The Carl Rosa Grand Opera Season commenced on the 5th, at Drury Lane, with Gounod's never remarkably successful "*Romeo and Juliet*." The only semi-novelty as yet given has been Wallace's "*Lurline*," and Meyerbeer's "*Star of the North*;" but we are promised Mr. F. H. Cowen's long-talked-of "*Thorgrim*." Among the artistes, two new-comers, Mademoiselle Zélie de Lussan and Miss Lucille Saunders, have both scored successes; and, on the whole the season has realised expectation. It will be a curious coincidence, should the Italian Opera commence on the 19th of May with "*Romeo et Juliette*," which is most probable.

There is neither youth nor beauty in the chorus at Drury Lane. Impresario surely never collected together on one stage such a representative crowd of middle-aged plainness before. Their voices do not make great atonement for their looks, but the orchestra, under Mr. Goossens, is admirable.

I have been accused of being unjustly severe on musical America. A few days ago I received a letter from a lady who went out to — (it is in Minnesota) a couple of years ago. She says :—"I quite agree with your opinion as to American music. It is with very few exceptions utter rubbish. But the conceit and arrogance of the so-called musicians is beyond belief. Beethoven himself is nowhere beside the genius of the musicians of the North-West. . . . One man who has been to Germany for a few months to study, has come back, and now announces himself as a violin 'virtuoso!'" We certainly have conceited musicians in happy England, but we have not reached this yet.

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

NEW MUSIC RECEIVED :

From Robert Cocks & Co. : "La Creole," Waltz (Florence Fare). An effective and very easy set, with well marked time, and a good swing. There is an absence of originality about some of the melodies which perhaps will make it all the more popular.—"Tipperary." Song, by Gerald Lane, has a decided flavour of "Father o'Flynn" about it, perhaps scarcely avoidable, but the words are very Anglo-Irish. Yet it is not a bad song in its way ; but there is pathos in the harmonies of a true Irish ballad—the "Kerry Dance," for an example.—"The Sea of Life" (Clifton Bingham and Frank Moir). In striving for simplicity, Mr. Moir has unluckily succeeded in making his song thin, in the third verse especially, where the words seem to demand much broader treatment. Still, it is a praiseworthy song, and this defect is not such as would affect it with the public ; rather the reverse.—"Woman's Way." (F. E. Weatherly and J. L. Roeckel). Mr. Roeckel is an accomplished musician, and should not condescend to write songs like this. We all know the "Three Old Maids of Lee" ; but that was an arrow shot by chance at that shifting target "public favour," and hit the very centre of the bull's eye. This arrow won't ; it is not good enough.—"The King's Jester" (G. H. Newcombe and Gerald F. Cobb). Even Mr. Cobb, who has written some musicianly songs, condescends now, though there is something bright about his song, and a touch, here and there, that bespeaks the scholar. But the words are terribly antiquated in style, and have not the merit of point.—"The Tar's Home." Mr. Michael Watson's belief in the "yeo-ho" style of song was strong, but this is not one of his happiest examples of it. There is a great deal of "heave-ahoy" throughout it—rather too much—and three verses exactly alike are monotonous.—"My Angel." (Clifton Bingham and Frederick Bevan). By no means a bad song in its way, barring a faint trace of one of Blumenthal's. The words have the merit of simplicity and the music suits them admirably. It is likely to find popularity.—"O'er the Strait." (F. E. Weatherly and Louis Diehl). With a very artistic title page, this song looks attractive ; but the interior is a little disappointing. It is apparently a sequel to Douglas Gordon, but the music is monotonous, without striking melody, and displays a straining after effect which is weak.—The words of "The Sawdust Chest" are very funny, better indeed than the music, by George Le Brunn. It deals, playfully, with the army, and would score at a smoking concert.

From Selby Wood & Co., Aberdeen : "Tobermory." Humorous Scotch song by Arthur King and George Beddie. This is a weird, wild, and wonderful production, and where the humour comes in it is difficult to say. Perhaps if we heard it sung we might laugh. Anyway, we would try to, if we suffered for it afterwards.

From Stanley Lucas, Weber, & Co. : "Ye Mariners of England," a naval ode, for chorus and orchestra, by Edmundstone Duncan. Without hesitation, we can pronounce this a very fine work, and worthy of all recognition, even if it never obtains it. It is a setting of Campbell's stirring poem, well worked out, and scholarly without being abstruse. We commend it to choral societies in want of a novelty and weary of a surfeit of things foreign.



Our Amateurs' Play-Box.

The annals of the amateur stage have yet to be written. Already many a heart beats high with hope to find its name engraven on those glorious tablets, and presently the man of destiny, this Froude of the footlights, will appear, and the record will be made. And when these chronicles are completed, large and bold upon the finest page will be the story of the Irving Club's too brief possession of the Lyceum. How, thanks to Mr. Irving's generosity, they strutted and fretted their short hour upon his stage; how loving their art "not wisely but too well," they made shift to try a fall with Shakespeare in one of his impracticable battle plays, "Henry IV., part I.," and thereby perplexed their audience in the extreme; how the actors kept up such a chorus of laughter round the sack-drinking old knight that no one in the front of the theatre could be found ill-mannered enough to join in without a special invitation; how these poor mirthless ones were therefore bound to find enjoyment elsewhere, and chose a moment when the tragic muse should hold the stage, for a little unrestrained indulgence; how Sir John Falstaff, the traditional mount of flesh, and lusty withal, was haunted by some memory of the cynical Jaques, and wishing to be a moral villain, would from time to time remind us of the sixth age when "his big manly voice turning again toward childish treble, piped and whistled in his sound;" and how, despite these and many other novelties, there was no lack of sound and interesting acting, and the high water mark of amateur achievement was registered, as was only proper, at the liveliest and most respected centre of dramatic art. Now it is on this one point that the Irving Club are most to be congratulated. Their luck and their desert go hand in hand when Mr. Irving at this juncture offers them his theatre and all the prestige that goes along with it. Some official recognition of amateurs and the work they can do was wanted, and now it has been given. The result should be seen in the quickening of energies throughout the amateur world, and in the consolidation and proper discipline of those undeniable forces, which, scattered as now over a score or fifty clubs, too often reflect discredit upon all connected with these guerilla bands of art soldiery. For the most part the reading of the play was highly intelligent, and it was not altogether the actors' fault if the entertainment was frequently dull. Falstaff has so much to do with keeping the play alive, and carrying through the matchless comedy scenes in which he has a part, that his broad shoulders may be said to bear more than half the burden of the piece. The choice of a Falstaff is therefore one to tax the judgment of any manager or committee. Mr. Augustus Littleton has several qualities that fit him for the character; but clever and effective as were many of his tones, gestures, and details of stage business, his knowledge of broad comedy acting was all too little for so vast a study; and notwithstanding his huge bulk, we had but a shadow of the fat knight before us. The one actor in the club with force and comprehensive grasp of humour sufficient for Sir John was practically wasted upon Bardolph, whose lines Mr. Grout spoke with meaning and convincing effect. Mr. Sherbrooke was a lively Poins, with more of the Gratiano about him than the consort of thieves and gaol birds; but this is the age of revelation, and Mr. Sherbrooke's may be the "Real Poins" at last. Mr. Edwards has a quaint face and a curious high thin voice, which make up the stock in trade of his Francis, the poor badgered potboy of the "Boar's Head," the nearest approach to a Shakespearean comedy figure seen during the play. But the comedy as a whole was indifferent, and all the interest centred upon the heroic figures of the King, Prince Hal, Hotspur, and their immediate connexions. Here the club shone unexpectedly. There was enough and to spare of stately elocution, abundance of dignity, not a little distinction, and at least two scenes of genuine power. Mr. Arthur Ayers was

the hero, for he was the first to breast a wave of real passion, and his weighty manner and authoritative style saved more than one heavy scene from becoming tedious. A more human or more kingly king than he could hardly have been found. Beside this admirable piece of work Mr. Frank Halden's *Hotspur*, good though it was, looked unfinished, insincere and tame. He is, perhaps, the best elocutionist the club possesses; but lack of physique stands terribly in the way when he plays young heroes, and he has but a dim notion of keeping reserves of passion for a climax. And, but for the clear speech and marked diction of his playing, *Hotspur* would be a disappointment. Mr. Buckley and Mr. Bell were dignified and spoke with feeling for the verse as well as for its sentiments; Mr. Boulton, inclined as ever to underacting, made a memorable figure of the wild Welshman, Glendower, but failed to colour it as picturesquely as he had outlined the soldier seer; and Mr. Roberts, the victim of some ill-considered management, looked handsome, even when sitting aimlessly on the floor. Mr. Ben Webster, lent for the afternoon by Mr. Alexander, was a boyish, gallant Hal, somewhat frightened of the long speeches, but impulsive, merry, and princely as well could be; Miss Webster making a delightful Lady Percy; Mrs. Bell appearing as Mrs. Quickly; and Miss Eleanor Rees, by speaking a few words of Welsh and singing a Cymric ballad, charming a typical English audience, only too eager to regard the whole revival as a Barnum curiosity and encore anything that savoured of novelty or would serve as a subject for after-dinner gossip. The experiment has conclusively shown that amateurs can act even beneath the shadow of such giant reputations as the Lyceum has nourished; and now that they have had an outing in Shakespeare, it may be hoped that original work of less difficulty but equal interest will be their aim.

The Granville Club may don their flannels and their pads, and wield the bat and fling the ball with colonial effect, but they wear the sock and buskin with a difference. "Two Roses" cannot be "lightly worn and lightly tossed aside" as though poor Albery gave never a thought to how this should be done or that be said. Who was stage manager the other evening, I wonder? "Lord, lord, what fools these mortals be!" What a hundred chances were let slip of making human creatures of him or her, which, lost, revealed the very bones of half the characters, and must have made dozens shiver at their lack of flesh and blood. The majority, though, seemed very pleased, and though they tittered more than onlookers should at the callow courting of the Quixotic Jack, the play seemed to exercise a charm almost as potent as when David James and Farren, Kyrle Bellew and Righton, Miss Larkin and Amy Roselle, made sport for kings, and for the people too. Mr. Vivian Reynolds was the best of the men. The name is known to me, I fancy, as that of a reciter; indeed, there was something of the good reciter's quiet and precision about his tones and gestures. In any event, his Caleb was very satisfactory; wanting in ease and naturalness, but, by contrast with his fellows, capable. Poor Digby Grant tried hard, but he might as well have tried to scale Olympus as sound the depths of this *chevalier d'industrie*. Because it seems easy when an Irving plays it, is no proof that anyone can score as well. Mr. Nicholson did better as the hero, but it is to be hoped he plays with more fire in the cricket field than on the stage. Mr. and Mrs. Jenkins were passable, at moments even funny, but the humour did not spring from the heart, only from the pages of the play. Promise, and promise of no uncertain kind, showed in the Lottie and Ida, but the company, as a whole, was over-weighted.

"The Ladies' Battle" might be seen more frequently with great advantage. It is a wonder that the play is so often passed over. Every part in it is good. That should endear it to the amateur as to the professional. Then it wants costumes, another immense advantage, for nobody disbelieves in the becoming qualities of wigs and other people's clothes, *i.e.*, if they happen to come from a costumer's. And, altogether, the only persons likely to be bored are the audience. This, too, is extremely unlikely, for the story is good, and if the acting be but passable their enjoyment also is assured. The Surrey Strollers are equal to a very fair rendering of a piece like this, and their choice was a good one. No single member of the cast attained to anything like brilliance; on the contrary,

the level was that of conscientious, highly respectable mediocrity. But then the level was kept right away through, and for consistency much may be sacrificed. If none of these actors had a very vivid remembrance of that wonderful revival at the Court, when the Kendals, Hare, Herbert, and Miss Grahame were in the cast, their intelligence is to be greatly commended, or they must possess an invaluable stage manager. The acting was all within artistic bounds, and the groupings and positions quite in the spirit of the piece. Mrs. Cooper Keates and Miss Grace Bayne could not reach the pathetic note of the Countess and her girl rival, but their playing was pretty and interesting and full of womanly charm. Mr. Gordon Young read Henri admirably, never forgetting the assumed character of the groom; and Mr. Frank Vaus, though beset by temptations to overdo the comic Gustave, resisted them with rare strength of purpose, and came through the ordeal with credit. A little more incisiveness and Mr. Wright would have been capital as the Baron; but the faults were few, and always outweighed by the merits.

It is farce first and the rest nowhere just at present. Even Mr. Wilson Barrett, an optimist if ever there was one, and a man whose splendid faith in the future of the drama deserves a greater reward than it has met with up to now; even he is beginning to lose heart and to contrast the classical revivals and Shakespearean productions of five years since with the sadly growing taste for farce and rubbish of to-day. Well, amateurs must swim with the stream, I suppose, like their betters. And so it comes about that the Hampstead Club, who have built up a worthy reputation on play after play of more or less excellence, are at last willing to undertake a piece of the calibre of "Turned Up." True, they are not quite lost to the memory of what has been. They put a spoonful of jam to hide some of the powder (I speak for myself), and Mr. Jerome's "Fennel" is at once a happy contrast for the farce to follow, and a welcome sign that the ambitious and artistic still find a section of the club loyal to their cause. In the name of the Lyceum I pray this party may soon be in the ascendant, and drive from the councils of the club all who favour the empty humour of latter-day farce. "Fennel" was carefully played by Mr. Rowney, Mr. Walker, Mr. Heron, and Mrs. Evans. The deformed hero was beyond the actor's power, but Sandro, the straight-limbed rival, had a manly look and a winning style; and if the heroine was rather tame and stood aloof from the love passages, well that is the usual fault of amateurs on the stage. "Turned Up" should have had another month's rehearsal, and a professional stage manager to teach everyone the ins and outs of farce acting. These pieces want more preparation than a melodrama or a tragedy. One screw loose and they all may go to pieces. There was more than one screw in a wobbly condition here, but the play did not suffer very much, for the general run of the acting was not up to the mark. Notable exceptions, however, were Mr. Pownall and Mr. Capper, and Mr. Gerald Phillips, too, worked loyally and with true humour.

There are some comedians who tickle you amazingly, producing any amount of inward contortion and squirmings, but over whom you can't laugh outright till you are home and in bed, thinking it all over. Mr. Colley Salter is not one of these. He is a pick-me-up warranted to act, powerfully, within five minutes. And if you have been a little out of sorts, what a revolution he effects! A blue pill isn't in it for the sudden putting right of whatever has been going wrong. *Time will Tell*, indeed. The title is a misnomer, when Mr. Salter is playing Clodworth. His hearty boisterous humour doesn't need a moment before it tells, and "tells" on the winning side too, for Mr. Salter is a majority in himself. And when in addition a club can bring a strong actor like Mr. Sansbury into the field, they are pretty sure of a big success. For in him amateurs have an artist who not only studies, but is physically capable of giving form and substance to his, or other people's, imaginings. Even such an Aunt Sally of a character as the morbid John Carr, stuck up for everyone to have a shy at, becomes invested with a certain glamour at this player's hands. One loses an appreciable amount of glaring colour and he doesn't seem quite such a bore; that is a triumph, indeed. As for the others, some were good, some weren't. Being in a generous mood, I have put the finest strawberries at the top, and the poor

stale scentless, insipid ones I intend to keep from any human eye. It may not be critical but it is just, for the Iola do good and useful work, and are not to be hardly borne upon. The Count had not the flavour of nobility, sham nobility I mean; the genuine article has none, beyond irreproachable linen, faultless breeding, and a strong smell of soap and water. (Fancy getting that over the footlights!) Mr. Salter's "Dook" was of the same pattern. Both reminded me more than they should of Mr. Coborn's aristocracy, when he takes his "'ammer in his 'and." "The hair was putt hon like the wig and the 'air hoil," if I may so express it. Mr. Collins tries well; presently he will do what he tries for. The ladies were strong. Mrs. Renton is quite the most refreshing little actress amateurs have, and Miss St. Lawrence is interesting and picturesque. But Lettice "is my only joy," and so the audience sang as they and I trooped out together.

How many thousand amateurs are there? Scores. How many dancers among them? Well, I know only two; Mr. Charles Colnaghi and Mr. George Nugent. Yet when the Guards produced their burlesque at Chelsea, where were the nimble two? not on the stage, though I fancy I caught sight of one in front of the house, little recking what a pang it cost me to see him thus condemned like a pensioner or a convicted prisoner to inglorious inaction. What does it matter, or rather what should it, if the one isn't a soldier and the other is ordered, by what I am told is best described as "some silly old buffer," to the woilds of Oireland. The acting corps should be open to the best; and insubordination is an excellent thing at times. As it was, what enjoyment was there in watching gallant guardsmen going in for Gaiety tactics, and proving no more successful than the lady who tried to imitate a coster in her endeavour to ignite a lucifer, and for the same reason; "because they wern't built that way." "Fra Diavolo" had been doctored by that astute physician, Mr. William Yardley, and brought up to date as spick and span and full of kick as Faust under the spell of the Prince of the nether world. When Mr. Solomon takes up his ear-trumpet, or type-rack, or whatever it is he composes with, the result is always a pop, as of a champagne cork, and then gubble-gubble-gubble comes the frothy, frisky golden wine of melody. But the arch enchanters of burlesque are not authors but actors. And the two, the twin heroes, were missing. So, let Captain Ricardo and Mr. Macdonald and Sir Augustus Webster and Mr. Roberts do what they would, this one sacrificing in the cause of art one portion of his anatomy and that one another (I can't go into particulars, as this is not a half-penny evening newspaper), the level reached was not so high as formerly. The quartette named did well, acted with spirit, and played up capitally to their heroines, Miss Annie Schletter and Miss Rose Hawdon, experts both, alike in acting with grace, singing with ease, and dancing with prettiness; but without swallows there can be no real spring (or is it summer?) and my two birdies were awa.'

For a merry party what better fare could be chosen than "Confusion," what better cooks than the Windsor Strollers, what heartier appetite than comes of "leading the pick of the Quorn." Melton was in luck when it got at one fell swoop an audience of jovial huntsmen, a company handled by Mr. Trollope, and a play or rather two plays that even a dissenter would laugh at. For "A Pair of Lunatics" served as *hors d'oeuvres*. What a bright little play that is. The sort of thing to produce in the drawing-room after a very excellent dinner, before an apoplectic old uncle from whom you have large expectations. You would make your fortune; which leads me to think that Mr. Walkes must be making his; for his elegant trifle is bobbing up serenely in every direction, succeeding "A Happy Pair," good luck to it. Well Miss Le Bert and Captain Bagot put a lot into both words and action, and gained for it another thousand or so, of admirers, so that was good enough. But "Confusion" was the draw, of course; for Captain Gooch was cast for Uncle Blizzard. Oh, what an actor he is! You talk of your Leslie, your Hill, or your Hare; pooh! a Gooch is as good as them all. What an eye, what a voice, what a walk! Burton would never have written an "Anatomy of Melancholy" had there been a Captain Gooch in those days. Munden is spoken of as an actor whose fun travelled along the facial muscles till it reached the eye, whence it beamed. So again at Melton with this

veteran amateur. Exquisite humour rolled in his gait, shone in his face, quavered on a high note, thundered on a low one ; and with Miss Henderson to help as Lucretia, their share of the farce could not have been better rendered. Mr. W. Elliott, once a member of the Bancroft company, and as clever and finished a light comedian as I have seen, speedily made one forget that Mr. Glenney ever played the hero ; and Mr. Biddulph Butler, another comedian of unusual promise, Mr. Trollope, Miss Millett, and Miss Forrest, gave special prominence to the hazy minor characters. It was a pity the low comedy servants were handled as "gentle folk," but mistakes will occur in the best regulated amateur dramatic companies.

A heavy rim of black round the eyes, like the border of Messrs. Jay's advertising circulars, rays of limelight shooting across the stage in every direction (one each for the minors, two for the first quality villain, and three each for the hero and heroine), deep tones, funereal walk, and hurried music, not of the "Tom Bowling" or "Rule Britannia" school, will go a long way towards playing a piece of the "Charms" description. For which reason it is useful for amateurs who can enjoy these garnishings quite as much as the third rate professional, and afford them very much better. There are drawbacks, of course. The unpractised gasman may dodge you with your lime and get it in your eye at the wrong moment, making you wink instead of glare ; or he may focus the wrong side when you put your blood-stained hand upon your heart, and make your coat look like the sheet at a magic lantern show. But given your limelight man, the drama is practically safe. There is one thing to be regretted about this piece. You don't see the villain Rooker murdered. Now I think it really hard that a murder should be done, like the thunder and the turbulent crowds and the bloody battles, "off." We have paid our money, some of us, and we ought to have that murder. The actor has, generally, been murdering the part the whole way through, and poetical justice demands we should see him weltering in his gore, with a "lime" full on Rochegune's knife or pistol or galvanic battery, whatever it was that killed him. Then we should smile, quietly and feel happy. Without this even Mr. Sansbury with his impulsive boyish picture of Arthur Medwyn could not satisfy me. He was very clever, very strong, very intense, but I felt I was being defrauded. Oh, to have seen Rooker dead ! it was like Eugene Aram's mighty yearning for crime. Mr. Teversham and Mr. Hickman too, Mr. Day, Mr. Sharp, Mr. Stanton, Mr. Smart, charmed they never so wisely and so earnestly, were of no more avail ; and even in the presence of Miss Vincent and Miss Ricketts, I could not subdue the ghoulish thirst. "Charms" to be truly charming, ought to have some gory scenes as a kind of dainty embellishment.

Macready-Burbage is a good stage-figure ; "fat," not in the corporeal, but in the artistic and technical sense, and indeed almost "obese ;" a child of the brain, who does Mr. Charles Fawcett honour. But a play is not made by the introduction of one effective figure, though "fat" as the Claimant. It wants a man of good, sound lungs, and mighty thews and sinews (I'm still in metaphor) to carry off a fine, "fat" character without a stumble, or a tremble, or an ugly strain. And if there are no other people about him in much the same condition, attention gets concentrated upon him to his own confusion, and to the possible loss of his self-possession. And then there's a fall. Now the Vaudeville A.D.C. have a solid athlete in Mr. Chapman. He does not turn a hair, or care a rap for the whole world, provided there is some disguise for him to appear in. Macready-Burbage ought to be a disguise for anybody. It certainly is enough for him ; and very competently and merrily did he depict the woes of that seamy personage. When he is done with, though, nothing but worse remains behind. So that it is really difficult to get up an interest in the poor gentlemen who are foredoomed to inglorious places in the race, ere ever the prompter's bell has rung out the start. Master King showed pretty style, and a good pace, however ; and Miss Florence Worth, Miss Ada Mellon, and Mrs. Hawke, tripped briskly and cheerily over the ground ; while there were excellent points in the clean, lengthy strides, straight backs, and well trained action of Messrs. King, Hole, Moore, and Wallace, who looked equal to coming in first if only the handicapper would see that they were given a fair chance.

Sophocles' "Antigone," sacred to the memory of Helen Faucit ! That's the kind of play I like to see good amateurs attempt. Something in which you have to draw on your imagination for your facts, as Sheridan, foreseeing my need of an illustration, most kindly put it. Something that acts on the artistic temperament like a ghost story. Stimulating at the first mention ; then slowly, but surely congealing the blood and making each particular hair to stand on end, as the terrifying details of the study are unfolded ; finally bracing the nerves and quieting the chattering teeth, when it is seen that the last dread drop of the bitter cup must be swallowed, and the supernatural must be confronted by the mortal. There is honour to be won, even in defeat, in a combat of this kind. And Lady Maidstone, to whose courage this resurrection of the long-buried "Antigone" was due, is entitled to high praise for her whole-hearted attempts to infuse new life into the dead bones of the Greek heroine. Anyone who tries to stay this deadly wave of farce now devastating every field of dramatic energy is entitled to support and encouragement ; and this is especially the case when a forlorn hope of Lady Maidstone's description is ventured on. For nothing can equal the perils of raising a barrier that may provoke ridicule. There is little enough sympathy for tragedy of any kind ; but ancient methods of tragic miming have still fewer friends. Such deficiencies as were noticeable in these performances at Loughborough are therefore to be held of small account, the will in this instance doing duty for the deed. The heroine was fair and graceful, a modern Greek, more suited to the drawing-room than Athenian groves ; but thought and passionate interest in Antigone redeemed the acting from any charge of feebleness, and much was turned to favour and to prettiness. Mr. De Lisle and Mr. Davies are evidently used to declamation, and both played with studious care, if also studious narrowness of view. Miss Jenkinson and Miss Weston strove hard to individualise their parts, but as yet their want of training is against them. They may console themselves with this, however, that few amateurs could have done much with the characters entrusted to them, and they were at least associated worthily with an experiment that reflects honour upon the whole amateur dramatic world.

The Students would have done themselves and their cause more good by staging a work of some modern "Married Life," than by reviving Buckstone's old farce of that name. "Married Life" ! what a theme ! If you haven't a store of comedy here, and tragedy, too, if you choose to look on that side of the picture, a history of smiles and tears, then suffering human nature interests you not, and you will never be an actor or a playwright. See, too, how you can fit your audience, not of course with horrid revelations of the particular skeletons each member of it has house-room for, but with facetious reference to the woes their social antagonists are burdened with. How you could send South Kensington into shrieks over the connubial distresses of Seven Dials, and how Poplar would appreciate the tiffs of Mayfair ! And instead of all this, there is nothing but the stage view of life in Mr. Buckstone's day, a very poor compensation for the racy realities of to-day. Students should keep abreast of the age, not lag behind a quarter of a century in the rear. Progress not retrogression is the cry of the world, and when at a plunge three or four hundred people are sent spinning into the stagnant waters of stage satire twenty years old, the bath can be of benefit neither to them nor their bathing attendants. In several of these students, too, there are the makings of an actor, notably in Mr. Smart and Mr. Allen, though Mr. Mayer and Mr. Kitts are not far behind. But such work as this antique farce can only rust the wits and distract the aim, no matter how estimable and promising the actors may be. As for the ladies, headed by Miss Algar and Miss Phillips, they will never learn what modern manners are if they are bound within the limits of these impossible old pieces ; and Mr. Hoffman and his brother guides may be warned against such practices, whereby many a capable young artist may be spoilt. No, Buckstone is not in touch with anyone now-a-days, and should be, least of all, where such a writer as Mr. Pinero is president, inspirer, patron, and friend.



Our Omnibus=Box.

10

PUBLIUS TERENTIUS AFER.—

*These Greetings.**20th April, 1890.*

MY DEAR TERENCE,—

A word for—not the play of sentiment, not the play of passion, not the play of historical romance; but that strong medley of the commonplace, that *Bow Bells* novelette made audible, with its character-analysis all subordinate to its situations, that dust of life sifted out to a big handful of stones—the Adelphi melodrama. For sweet are the uses of adversity, as witnessed in a representation of this nature, and if Bill from the slums pays his shilling in the main for a full shilling's worth of blood and bludgeon, his conscience none the less receives a rebuff or two that he is not slow as a rule to appreciate and applaud. For Bill's pachydermatous soul must be stirred up with a toasting fork, not tickled with a feather of refined sentiment. Yet, please you, this is the lesser use of melodrama. For that same stout, coarse-fibred fellow will have a hand in the general ethics of the stage (the stage in the abstract, I mean), taking the middle place as he does between legitimate drama and plays of song and motion, and holding them a'balance in his great fists. Holding them a'balance! Yes, even as the mainspring middle class regulates the ticking of the upper and lower wheels of existence, not being in itself the most delicate part of the mechanism. Now, it is curious that the masses will not tolerate inconsistencies as the classes will, and in this lies the first of the sober lessons of melodrama. Extravagance the former body have an affection for, but it must be only such as is an emphasis of facts. They have an instinct for recognizing the ring of false coin, and such they reject. It must be remembered that the pittance of the West End is the stallite of the East; that it is a proverb with actors to play to this honest theatre-lover, and that when all is said and done, the upper house of the boxes only sets the seal of its approval on such play-bills as the commons have passed. Granted? Well, if they who sit in judgment on the higher art, do find great content in the lower, something assuredly may be said in favour of the lower. And that something *may* be said is proved by the fact that a uper-dramatic element (if merely an exaggeration of probabilities and not an inconsistency) introduced into a play otherwise under perfect artistic control often confirms its success with Montmorency in the stalls as with Jack in the gallery. If society smiles at bathos—a ssociety will smile at anything from virtue to its own failings—the gallery hisses it, and so gives society a snub, and those who seek to amuse it, a lesson. The strength of a rope is its weakest part, and the weakest part of a play is that which elicits the first hiss. Again, melodrama is the foundation rubble on which the temple of art stands firm, and dependent for clean drainage. Again, just as a poor or careless picture by an acknowledged artist enables us to pick out the defects in his greater works, so this rough master teaches us where pieces of high ambition often fail, and that by a forced comparison with his own rude directness of appeal. For he has not learned refinement, and so has escaped an acquirement of possible great evil. He prefers the sweet brown sugar of life to the pale, anæmic loaf. He goes unfearing, undettered by the giggling comments of fashion, and he speaks outright from the heart, unwitting, thank God, of those juggling Hell-wains of artificiality that follow in the steps of that same *dilletante* refinement—nice knowledge, to wit, of men and manners and disbelief in each, and that last infirmity of cultivated minds, commonsense. Commonsense, in good sooth! A murrain on the lumbering, mutton-headed giant, whose great feet, shambling over the grassy lawns of romance, crush the life

out of all sweet daisy buds of poetry there. He and the Board of Works have been the universal levellers. They will always look a gift horse in the mouth. They take a picturesque legacy of landscape and roll it as flat as a carpet. Had they their way, they would shovel all the mountains of the world into the valleys, steam-roll the whole till it looked like Sahara, and then sow it with cabbage seed in avenues. A pest, again, on the senseless bully, who would drive imagination from the earth, as he has sought to drive colour and the spiritual gaiety of life ! He hath made us with his stubborn pressure a huge community of mutes, who find food for laughter in the feathered cap, and solemnly worship the chimney-pot hat, that worthy shibboleth of a dreary respectability. But I wander in alleys of stucco, Terence, and I would be away, "Away ! for I will fly to thee"—to the woods of Arden—"not charioted by Bacchus and his pards, but on the viewless wings of poesy, though the dull brain perplexes and retards." Away from commonplace reflections on commonplace existence ! Away from melodrama (for think not that I love it, my son, though humbly conscious, i'faith, of its usefulness)—and so to banks of moss and wild thyme, and the courageous poetry of him who was not of an age. But, Lord love me ! who is this pansophical gentleman, with the jolly red cheeks and the rich gasping of laughter ? Who



is this genial philosopher, who shakes with mirth over the freaks of motley, and sounds the gamut of the "Seven Ages" as if they were the strings of a banjo ? Alas ! here is Arden about us, but where be the Ardenites ! Not of them is this younger Falstaff. Nothing, my good Mr. Bouchier, can warrant the reading ; nothing but a deformed conception of originality account for it. Thy keynote is out of tune for the playing ; no wonder if thereto others sing false. The duke, the court, the pretty shepherdesses—all are under the influence of thy mistake ; for who shall pipe true when the melancholy of Jaques is held but as a domino to the face to hide the mirthful wrinkles behind ? It is true, therefore, that here we do not have the woodland spirit of the play caught as the true artist catches the soul of his sitter ; but, nevertheless, there is some excellent compensation given for the failing. Rosalind is, I confess it, Terence, a revelation. Here and there she has borrowed a tinge of the melancholy that Jaques has discarded, but for the most part she is as vivacious and sprightly and *spirituelle* as the mischievous, sweet-hearted jade should be. And Audrey, my boy ! She smells of Arden, and the ruddy soul of the country is ripe in her jolly cheeks and her jocund pattering laughter. But laughter such as hers is not for thee, friend Jaques. Rather should thine be the restless chirp of the cynic disqualified by his surroundings ; a reciprocity of hurtless satire ; a half-disdainful chuckling

over an original "find." There should be nothing soul-expanding about it. If there were, thou wouldst not have far to seek for cure of thy melancholy, which is yet so ingrained in thy nature, that thou wilt not share in the beneficent finish of all those woodland troubles. For will not humour banish humours? Is Jaques's laughter humour—then physician cure thyself! or, if you can't, go to the Christian Scientists, who will heal you painlessly of anything from toothache to elephantiasis, from a broken leg to a broken heart, and that by merely sitting back to back with you and "willing" you well, in the manner depicted on the previous page. At least so has been told,

Yours distantly,

THE CALL-BOY.

Mr. Charles Wyndham re-appeared in London, after his most successful American tour, on March 22nd, and revived at the Criterion Robertson's comedy, "David Garrick." The play, though it has been seen so often, appeared to have lost none of its attraction, Mr. Wyndham and Miss Mary Moore, of course, appearing in the name rôle and as Ada Ingot. The only very noticeable change in the cast was that Mr. William Farren played Simon Ingot, of whom he made a more refined and polished character, with perhaps advantage to the play. His performance was much applauded.

"Lady Lovington, or A Soirée Dramatique," by "George Villars," (the *nom de plume* of a lady of title), was played at the Ladbroke Hall on March 24th by Madame Madge Inglis's pupils in a manner that reflected the highest credit on their instructress. The story of the play, though slight, is entertaining, and the dialogue is full of sparkle. A stage lover in an amateur performance is so bewitched by the perfections of the lady with whom he is acting, and whom he has long admired, that he proposes in reality, and another young lady who imagines her swain faithless, is reconciled to him on learning that the ardent avowal she has overheard is only addressed to a dummy at a rehearsal. This piece would suit amateurs. "The Sea Maidens," Mr. Roeckel's cantata, and several other numbers in the programme of the concert which followed, were so artistically rendered as to prove how valuable is Madame Inglis's teaching

The *matinée* given at the Vaudeville Theatre on March 24th may be dismissed in a few words. "Andromeda," a one-act Greek tragedy by Miss Rose Seaton, was far too sombre and without that power which would compensate for its mournful tone. Some of the lines were excellent, and were well delivered by the authoress, who filled the title-rôle. On "Number Two," which the author Mr. Harry Croft Hiller informs the public it took him three years to complete, it is impossible to bestow any praise. It was incomprehensible in plot, and the only thing that could be gathered was that an Irishman, Mr. Larry O'Larrigan (well played by Mr. Fred Shepherd), was a matrimonial fortune-hunter, although with two women living with whom he had already gone through the ceremony of marriage. Miss Vennie Bennett, Mr. Charles Medwin, and Mr. George Hughes did all they could with their respective characters.

"For Her Child's Sake," the "dramatic episode" produced as a first piece at Terry's Theatre, on March 29th, must have been one of Sir Charles Young's juvenile efforts, for it is altogether artificial in sentiment and very weak. Geraldine (Miss Helen Leyton) has during her mother's absence become engaged to Aubrey Verschoyle (Mr. J. Nelson). On the return of Mrs. Ormonde (Miss M. A. Giffard), she will not then listen to the idea of the marriage, and we learn that Stephen Ormonde (Mr. Oscar Adye) has many years before deserted his wife and eloped with Aubrey's mother, and has been

the cause of the elder Verschoyle's death. Mrs. Ormonde has never forgiven the wrong done her, and has always led her daughter to suppose that her father was dead. Her husband re-appears, and is so penitent that at length Mrs. Ormonde, "for her child's sake," not only withdraws her objections, but for her own, we suppose, takes the reformed sinner to her arms. The best drawn character was that of old Mr. Marsham, Geraldine's grandfather, excellently acted by Mr. A. Ellis. "New Lamps for Old" here has grown into a complete success.

CRITIC

A very pretty and bright little piece, "The Gavotte," adapted from the French by Miss Minnie Bell, was played for the first time at Steinway Hall on April 2nd. Two girls, one Dora (Mrs. William Greet), rather sedate, the other Sylvia (Miss Sylvia Grey), a happy madcap, leave the ball-room to go to their rooms just when the gavotte, in which they hoped to join, strikes up. Sylvia induces her sister to join in it, and then they talk of husbands and partners and flirtations and various things interesting to young ladies in their first season, and then before they take their bedroom candlesticks, Sylvia must have a last waltz. The dialogue was so "smart" and natural, the dancing so good, and the acting so easy and truthful, that the trifle was pronounced a decided hit. Miss Minnie Bell appeared to great advantage in a dialogue, "Is Madame at Home?" and also recited remarkably well.

The new Richmond Theatre was opened on Easter Monday, April 7, 1890, under the direction of Mr. Horace Lennard. It is a commodious and elegant building, decorated in a tasteful manner, and forms a portion of what used to be the Castle Hotel, Richmond. The theatre is 90 feet long and 40 feet wide, and 28 feet high—the stage 42 feet by 25 feet—and is provided with good dressing rooms. The seats of the auditorium are handsomely upholstered and are very comfortable, and there are numerous exits. After the National Anthem had been sung by Miss Bertha Colnaghi and the company, Mrs. Langtry delivered the following prologue, written for the occasion by Mr. Frederick Bingham:—

Friends of the Drama, lovers of the Play
 Assembled in this little house to-day,
 To you our welcome and our thanks we give,
 You, by whose favour long we hope to live;
 You, who our venture with success can crown,
 And give the Richmond Stage renewed renown.
 The Richmond Stage! What recollections rise
 As I those words pronounce. Before my eyes
 I see the quaint old playhouse on the Green,
 Where Quin and Kemble, Cooke, "the wondrous Kean,"
 Macready—all who won Fame's greenest bays
 Gave life to language in the olden days;
 Where Siddons reigned in her majestic might;
 Where Jordan's winsome laugh bade care grow light;
 Where Munden, Liston, Quick, and many more
 Such merry fellows raised the frequent roar;
 Where, too, the tyro—fearing—hoping—came
 To take the weary road which led to fame;—
 Charles Matthews, sword in hand, determin'd, bold,
 And Helen Faucit, heart with dread grown cold.
 That little playhouse from our sight has gone,
 It had outlived its day and night came on;
 But now another morn is breaking here
 Whilst all around is bright, serene and clear;
 The Muses, now no longer forced to roam,
 Again in Richmond find a worthy home.
 Yonder at rest beneath an ancient tower
 Sleeps Edmund Kean; who often spent an hour
 At the old "Castle," which stood on this spot,
 And there, carousing, stage fatigues forgot;

The ground is sacred to his memory fond,
 And here, in hope that fortune will respond
 To our appeal and help the Richmond Play,
 We open to the world our doors to-day.
 Now royal Richmond's veterans and sons,
 In whom the love of things theatric runs,
 And you, sweet lasses of her far-famed Hill,
 Help us this old dramatic soil to till.
 The stream which is your pride, in days of yore
 Good fortune to the "Castle" often bore;
 And may the kindly river of Success
 Flow on to us in all unboundedness.
 Down from its head the Thames will ever glide,
 But from another *source* must flow the tide
 Which bears prosperity within our view,
 And, friends, that source we hope to find in *you*.

This was followed by Horace Lennard's screaming farce "Namesakes" (played more than 1000 times by Toole's Company), and in it Messrs. Lawrence D'Orsay, Reuben Inch, Votty Brunton (original character), and Misses Minnie Inch and Susie Vaughan appeared. After various incidentals vocal and instrumental, by Miss Nellie Ganthony, Amy Roselle (who recited Clement Scott's "Woman and the Law" and "Brahma's Paradise,"), and by Messrs. Henry Pyatt, Templar Saxe, John Radcliffe, and Harry Nicholls, the curtain drew up on "Bardell v. Pickwick," in which some of the best known members of the profession appeared. In the evening "Jim the Penman" was played, with Lady Monckton and Mr. Arthur Dacre in their original characters, and at this representation and that of "A Scrap of Paper" on April 10, there were present the Duke of Cambridge, the Duchess of Teck, the Duchess of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, &c. Mr. Horace Lennard has every prospect of success in his new venture, and the proprietor, Mr. F. C. Mouflet, holds out every inducement, by the liberality of his catering in the refreshment department of the building, which is most excellently arranged, to secure a large amount of patronage.

The plot of "April Showers," produced at the Comedy on April 9th for a series of Wednesday and Saturday *matinées*, was fully given in the March number of THE THEATRE of last year. There has been but little alteration made in the play, but the cast was different. Miss Maud Millett and Mr. Walter Everard were again excellent in their original characters, and Miss Annie Hughes, who now plays Maggie Lacy, was delightfully natural. Mr. Nutcombe Gould was altogether excellent as Lord Lacy; Mr. Reeves Smith manly and true as his son Frank. Miss E. Brunton was not quite so happy as Mrs. Lawrence. Mr. Dagnall made the character of Mr. Clincher, senr., a little too common. "Released," a one-act drama by Charles H. Dickinson, was not commendable for either dialogue or plot, which is supposed to be laid in 1848 in Paris during the revolution. A criminal returns after five years' imprisonment, and claims his wife, who has been passing as an unmarried girl, and won the affections of an officer. The criminal (well played by Mr. Bassett Roe) is conveniently shot down, and so his wife is "released" from her hateful bondage.

"Pedigree," a three-act comedy by C. C. Bowring and F. H. Court, produced March 28, 1890, at Toole's Theatre, did not display much originality, but was made amusing by the excellence of the acting. Sir Jabez Blair (Mr. Edward Righton), a purse-proud, vulgar retired soap boiler, who worships the aristocracy, is determined that his daughter Nora shall marry rank, and wishes her to accept the Hon. Guy Spavin (Mr. Compton Coultts). Nora (Miss Sylvia Grey), however, is determined on choosing Captain John Pollard (Mr. Luigi Lablache). The father objecting, they call in the aid of their friend, Sydney Calthorpe (Mr. Yorke Stephens), a quick-witted barrister, who enlists to help them, his own lady-love, a bright actress, Kitty Clifton (Miss Vane Featherston), who passes herself off as a French countess, makes old Blair fall desperately in love with her, and at last propose; and amongst them all the conspirators concoct

a scheme that Captain Pollard shall be introduced as an Indian Rajah. He appears in that capacity to be so struck by Nora's charms that he proposes for her hand to old Blair, who is delighted that his daughter should become a Ranee. Then they turn on him, and threaten to make him the laughing-stock of all his friends by exposing the impostures that have been practised upon him, and so he consents to Nora's and Pollard's marriage. Mr. Lawrance D'Orsay, as Lord Martingale, an antiquated beau; Mrs. Robertha Erskine, as Mrs. Fitzpatrick, an Irish lady, who boasts of her "pedigree" and connections; her daughter Diana (Miss Eva Moore), and a pair of sweethearts, Robert (Mr. E. M. Robson) and Jane (Miss Mary Jocelyn), who as servant and soubrette bicker and coo alternately, made up an excellent cast. The success, however, was due to Miss Featherston, who was inimitable, and the life and soul of the play. Miss Sylvia Grey showed great promise in a comedy character.

On Thursday, April 10th, there was a second edition of "Ruy Blas and the Blasé Roué," in which some fresh songs for Miss Farren and Mr. Fred Leslie, and a grotesque *pas de quatre* and *pas de huit*, with new dances for Miss Letty Lind and Miss Sylvia Grey, have been introduced—. At the Grand during the past month Mr. William Terriss and Miss Millward have been playing to excellent business their original characters in "Harbour Lights," supported by an first-rate company which will go with them on tour.

Miss Marion Lea (the subject of our first photograph) entered the dramatic profession some five years ago, acquiring experience by two-and-a-half years' touring in the provinces. Her first London engagement was at the St. James's Theatre, under the Hare and Kendal management. Miss Lea is possessed of much versatility in her representation of character, as will be seen by the following list of parts, in all of which the young actress has made distinct successes: Clotilde, in "The Monk's Room," (Globe, October, 1888); Mrs. Bliss, in "That Doctor Cupid," (Vaudeville, January, 1889); Thérèse, in "The Farm by the Sea" (Vaudeville, May, 1889); and as Mademoiselle de Belle Isle, in "The Duke's Coast" (Avenue, March, 1889). Miss Marion Lea is now appearing at the St. James's, in "As You Like It," and her Audrey is generally esteemed to be one of the best that has been seen for years, and she is engaged for an important part in Mrs. Langtry's next production.

"The Prince and the Pauper," adapted by Mrs. Oscar Beringer as a play in four acts from Mark Twain's story of the same name, was produced at the Gaiety on Saturday afternoon, April 12th, 1890. Those who have not read the book, will find some little difficulty in following the play from the confusion arising from the fact that Miss Vera Beringer is not able to completely "double" the parts, and is compelled to call in the aid of Master Alfred Field-Fisher, the young lady and gentleman changing places and appearing each of them as the poor boy and the Prince. Tom Canty the pauper is frightfully ill-used by his drunken father John Canty. He strays away from home and arrives at the gate of Westminster Palace; there he is brutally driven back by the sentry, but Edward Prince of Wales who is in the courtyard causes him to be admitted, and to him Tom dilates on the pleasures of bathing in the river, the manufacture of mud pies, and such-like joys. The studious boy prince is fascinated by the freedom of such an existence, and makes Tom change coats with him. The prince then goes out, forgetting the alteration in his appearance, upbraids the sentry, and, as the Prince of Wales, threatens him with punishment. He is jeered at and hustled away by the crowd, and eventually is found by Mrs. Canty, who takes him for her own boy. John Canty comes on the scene and is nearly strangling him for running away, when Miles Hendon, a kind-hearted poor gentleman, takes his part, and a brawl ensuing, all are locked up in the Fleet Prison. There the Prince announces himself in his proper character, and Hendon after humouring him for a time, at length is led to believe in the truth of his story. In the meantime Tom Canty has been treated as the veritable heir to the throne; his insinuations that he is only Tom Canty are treated by the

courtiers, and even by his father Henry VIII, as mental hallucinations. The Prince and Hendon escape from prison and arrive at Westminster, just in time to prevent the coronation of Tom Canty as King of England (for Henry has died), the Prince being able to prove his identity by the production of the Great Seal of England, which has been entrusted to him by his late father, and which the lad had hidden away behind a suit of Milanese armour. Grown-up people will scarcely approve of such a very strong tax on their imagination, and children, who so enjoyed "Lord Fauntleroy," will scarcely be able to understand the play and reconcile it with what they may know of English history. Miss Vera Beringer was best in the prison scene, but was for the most part affected and stagey. Mr. W. H. Vernon was the very facsimile of Holbein's pictures of the uxorious king, and thoroughly illustrated the petulance and irritability joined with the sovereign power of the ailing monarch. Mr. F. H. Macklin was excellent as the generous kindly Miles Hendon, who shelters the lad, and saves him from being scourged, taking on himself the punishment. The John Canty of Mr. J. G. Taylor was a very powerful performance. Mr. Edmund Gurney as the Earl of Hertford, Mr. Ernest Hendrie as Lord St. John, and Miss Annie Irish as the unhappy and ill-treated Mrs. Canty deserve favourable mention. The piece was very handsomely staged.

"Juanna," the tragedy written by W. G. Wills, was revived at the Opera Comique on Wednesday afternoon, April 16th, 1890. It was originally produced at the (old) Court Theatre, May, 7th 1881. Mr. Forbes Robertson was the Don Carlos de Narcisso; Mr. Wilson Barrett, Friar John; Mr. G. M. Anson, Friar Philip; Madame Modjeska, Esteban; Miss Ada Ward, Clara Perez. The play, of which a full description will be found in *THE THEATRE* of June, 1881, was then produced as "Juana," and was in four acts; it obtained but a *succes d'estéme*. It was produced in its present form, in three acts, at the Alexandra Theatre, Liverpool, in October, 1881, under the title of "The Ordeal;" the only notable change being that the walling-up of Friar John as a punishment for the murder of which he accuses himself is done away with. Miss Francis Ivor, who on May 24th, 1888, achieved a decided success as Mathilde Aerts in "Midnight; or The Wood Carver of Bruges," enhanced her reputation as Juanna Estaban in the play under notice. Her performance was not altogether a great one, but in the tragic scenes and in her madness the actress manifested considerable power; it was a want of passionate love, in the first act particularly, that marred her representation as a whole. Miss Adrienne Dairolles was disappointing as Clara Perez. She was too vixenish and did not bring into prominence the allurements of the syren. Mr. Leonard Outram carefully illustrated the depth of the love he bore the woman for whom he risked his life; but the best played part was that of Friar Philip, rendered with a racy humour, and at the same time, quaint sententiousness by Mr. Sam Johnson. Mr. Ivan Watson was good as Pedro, a Modus-like character.

Mr. John Hare (whose portrait we give in this issue), made his first appearance on the stage of the Prince of Wales's Theatre, Liverpool, in a small part in "A Woman of Business," and amusingly relates that he was so nervous and in consequence acted so badly that he was nearly hissed off. But six months' practice enabled him to get over this, and obtain his first original part in "The Woman in Mauve." Mr. Hare, in 1865, joined the old Prince of Wales's Theatre, London, then under the management of Miss Marie Wilton and Mr. H. J. Byron, and made his *débüt* as Landlord Short in "Naval Engagements." For ten years Mr. Hare remained at the Bancrofts' Theatre, and soon made for himself a great name as Lord Ptarmigan ("Society"), Prince Perovsky ("Ours"), Sam Gerridge ("Caste"), Mr. Nettletop ("How She Loves Him"), The Hon. Bruce Fanquebere ("Play"), Beau Farintosh ("School"), Dunscombe Dunscombe ("M.P."), Sir Patrick Lundie ("Man and Wife"), Sir Peter Teazle ("School for Scandal"), Ezra Stead ("Tame Cat"), and also played in the farces "Box and Cox," and "The Goose with the Golden Eggs." In March, 1875, Mr. Hare entered on the management of the old Court Theatre, and among his splendid company were Mr. and Mrs. Kendal, Miss Amy Fawsitt, Mr. John Clayton, Mr. Charles Kelly, Mr. Kemble, and

Miss Ellen Terry. During his four years' management pieces specially worthy of notice produced were "Lady Flora," "Brothers," "A Nine Days' Wonder," "A Scrap of Paper," "The House of Darnley" (posthumous play by the late Lord Lytton), a very successful revival of "New Men and Old Acres," and "Olivia," by W. G. Wills, the closing piece produced during Mr. Hare's tenancy. In 1879 Mr. Hare entered into joint management with Mr. Kendal of the St. James's Theatre. Full particulars of the productions during their nine years' management will be found in THE THEATRE of September, 1888. At the close of this Mr. Hare played Jack Pontifex, in "Mamma" at the new Court Theatre, under Mrs. John Wood's management; and on April 24th, 1889, opened his own theatre, the Garrick, with "The Profligate;" this was followed by "La Tosca," and he is now appearing in "A Pair of Spectacles" as Mr. Benjamin Goldfinch, and in that character has won for himself the very highest dramatic reputation that can possibly be gained.

There was nothing very novel in "The Linendraper," produced at the Comedy on Thursday, April 17th. A retired shopkeeper (the linendraper), Mr. E. Righton, trusts to his butler Lush (Mr. Frank Wood) to teach him "etiquette," and Lush, through intercepting a telegram imagines from the information contained in it that Sarah, the housemaid, is Bazin's daughter. Sarah (Miss Cicely Richards) believes that her master is her father, and her outpourings of romantic filial affection are taken by him for a warmer love. Elinor March, who has been adopted by Bazin, refuses Captain Harold de Broke (Mr. Scott Buist), because she imagines her union with him will bring ruin on her benefactor; but eventually, the mistaken notion she has conceived through the wiles of Mrs. Maitland (Miss Susie Vaughan,) is got rid of and she is made happy. The applause that was accorded was due entirely to the acting of Messrs. Righton, Scott Buist, and Frank Wood, and Misses Cicely Richards and Vane Feathers-ton. Mr. Walter McEwen was original and clever in the part of Reginald Maitland, a naturalist who discovers that his love for the pursuit of moths and butterflies will not altogether shut out the tender passion.

"Cerise and Co.," Mrs. Musgrave's farcical comedy, contains very clever lines, and some amusing situations, but it will have to be pulled together if it is to make such a reputation as "Our Flat" has achieved. It has no plot to speak of, but is simply a skit on ladies of title associating themselves with mercantile concerns. Lady Kilkenny is the Madame Cerise, a fashionable milliner, who to start her business borrows £1,000 from Lord Adolphus Perfect, anything but a perfect lord, for he not only exacts a serious interest, but actually obtains the money he advances from a kind-hearted American, Mr. Penguin Vanderbone, under the plea that it is to assist a necessitous lady. Vanderbone is on a visit to Europe with his mother and cousin, Miss Virginia Sutch, a wealthy heiress, who is not taken with the craze for marrying into an aristocratic family, but wishes to find a true-hearted man, with some "grit" in him, which she does in Mr. Styleman, an impecunious journalist. He is employed by Madame Cerise to write some puffing articles on her establishment; to make these more fetching, he engages a photographer to take views of the show-room, and unluckily Vanderbone is caught in one of the pictures flirting with the pretty manageress, Miss Blunt. This brings about a complication which of course is eventually cleared up, in the marriage of Vanderbone with Madame Cerise (Lady Kilkenny) and Miss Sutch with Styleman. Miss Myra Kemble was pleasant as Lady Kilkenny; Miss Lottie Venne clever, as she always is, as the American heiress, Miss Sutch. Miss Sylvia Grey as Miss Prettyman with just a *soupeçon* of a dance, and an amusing flirtation with Barlow, an amorous page, who spends his pocket money on sweeties for her (Mr. John LeHay), and Mr. Eric Lewis as Mr. Styleman, all did their best. Miss Emily Thorne made her first appearance since her return from Australia as Mrs. Obadiah Vanderbone, a "shoddy" American millionaire, and played the part well.

In its present form "Jess" (a dramatisation by Mr. J. J. Bisgood and Miss Eweretta Lawrence, of Rider Haggard's novel of the same name). would cer

tainly not do to place in the evening bill. It has, however, been determined to re-construct it. Jess is made to murder Frank Muller, though from the action of the play (unduly emphasized for dramatic purposes) we are led to believe that Jantze, the Hottentot, will revenge himself on the slayer of his parents. Jantze was a very powerful performance on the part of Mr. Athol Forde. As a matter of record the cast is given. Silas Croft, Mr. J. D. Beveridge, excellently, rendered : John Niel, Mr. T. B. Thalberg ; Frank Muller, Mr. Charles Dalton. vividly played, but a little too much of a dandy in his dress ; Hans Coetzee, Mr. Julian Cross, amusing and clever ; Carolus, Mr. J. Clulow ; Jan, Mr. Gilbert York ; Monte, Mr. Jerram : Hendrik, Mr. Calvert ; Mrs. Neville, Miss St. Ange ; Bessie Croft, Miss Helen Forsyth, very winsome ; Jess, Miss Eweretta Lawrence, wanting in strength.

"The Green Bushes," Buckstone's once favourite drama, was revived at the Adelphi on Saturday, April 19, but was not received with quite the enthusiasm that we imagine the Messrs. Gatti expected. Tastes have changed, and the wild improbabilities of travelling showmen figuring among "redskins," taking to themselves squaws as wives, and an American Indian Princess suddenly developing into a French countess with all the distinction and manner of a *grande dame*, are incidents not accepted as readily as they were some years ago. For purposes of record the cast of the principals is given :—Connor O'Kennedy, Mr. Frank Cooper ; George, Mr. W. L. Abingdon ; Wild Murtogh, Mr. J. D. Beveridge ; Muster Grinnidge, Mr. J. L. Shine ; Jack Gong, Mr. Lionel Rignold ; Dennis (the blacksmith, a small part but well played) Mr. Marshall Moore ; Geraldine, Miss Ada Ferrar ; Nelly O'Neil, Miss Kate James, who made the hit of the evening ; Miami, afterwards Madame St. Aubert, Miss Mary Rorke ; Tigertail, Miss Clara Jecks. The "Street in Dublin by Night," in Act iii, was a beautiful set, and reflected great credit on the artist, Mr. Bruce Smith. The costumes supplied by J. A. Harrison were very appropriate and in excellent taste.

For the Easter novelty at St. George's Hall, a new piece by Malcolm Watson, set to music by Corney Grain, was tried, and was much liked, for the lyrics were pleasing, the music flowing and harmonious, and the whole bright and lively. Mr. Alfred Reed has a capital part as Benjamin Braid, a retired London tradesman, who goes through a number of adventures in Spain, and loses his heart to a beauteous and bewitching widow, Dona Carmen (Miss Fanny Holland), and they were ably assisted by Miss Kate Tully, Mr. Avalon Collard, and Mr. J. C. Mackay. "Tommy at College," Mr. Corney Grain's new musical sketch is hardly one of the merriest and wittiest he has written.

The new *lever de rideau* at the Shaftesbury, "The Violin Makers," produced on Tuesday, the 22nd April, is an adaptation by Mr. Alfred Berlyn of François Coppée's imaginative play, "Le Luthier de Crémone," a version of which has before been presented to English playgoers. The piece is simple and touching and gives opportunity to Mr. Willard as the hunchback, Filippo, to show his versatility as an actor of resource. Filippo, one of the pupils of the violin-makers, Ferrari, loves his master's daughter, Giannina. Her affections are, however, given to the other apprentice, Sandro. Ferrari in the meantime has promised to bestow his child's hand upon him who wins a gold chain that has been offered to the maker of the best violin. Filippo, the more skilful of the two pupils, is sure of victory, which fact being recognised by Sandro, the latter steals his companion's instrument, and puts it in his own case. The evil ruse is, however, nullified by the action of Filippo, who, knowing where Giannina's affections are placed, in a spirit of noble self-sacrifice, again transposes the instruments, thus unwittingly securing to himself the coveted prize. This in the end he surrenders, wandering forth into the world with only his music for solace. As Filippo, Mr. Willard played with much knowledge and sincerity, and added yet another success to his repertory of his character-

renderings ; while Miss Olga Brandon, Mr. Alfred Bishop, and Mr. Elwood acquitted themselves well in a cultivated and agreeable performance.

Mr. F. H. Cowen's "Thorgrim" appears too late for a detailed notice in these pages. This is to be regretted, as its success is not only assured, but, we think, fully deserved. A few notes, however, will not be out of place. Mr. Cowen is fortunate in his librettist, Mr. Bennett, a gentleman who has erstwhile displayed considerable literary merit in the book composition of certain oratorios and cantatas that have made their mark in their day. This is the first ambitious work, however, so far as we know, that its author has submitted to the judgment of the public. The libretto is founded upon the story of "Vigland the Fair," which is one of those rude and crude sagas of love, hate, and revenge that Norse imaginations delighted in. Mr. Cowen has treated his theme in admirable spirit, and from the opening semi-barberous chorus "From his nest in the North," to the moonlight refrain of the lovers sailing seaward out of a world of turmoil, the "sweet thunder" of the orchestra is never out of touch with the weird character of the story. To a book so good and a score so complete, competent, and in some cases excellent, interpretation was given, Mr. Barton M'Guckin singing himself into honours as Thorgrim.

New plays produced and important revivals in London, from March 21, 1890, to April 19, 1890 :—

(*Revivals are marked thus**).

- Mar. 22* "David Garrick" (return of Mr. Wyndham). Criterion
 „ 24 "Hand in Hand," four act drama, by Edward Darbey (first time in London). Surrey.
 „ 24 "Lady Lovington ; or, a Soirée Dramatique," original one act comedy, by "George Villars." Ladbroke Hall.
 „ 24 "Andromeda," one act Greek tragedy, by Rose Seaton. *Matinée.* Vaudeville.
 „ 24 "Number Two," three act farcical comedy, by Harry Croft Hiller. *Matinée.* Vaudeville.
 „ 25 "Jess," four act drama, adapted from Rider Haggard's novel of the same name, by Eweretta Lawrence and J. J. Bisgood. *Matinée.* Adelphi.
 „ 27 "Mates," original one act operetta, music by Hamilton Clarke, words by Walter Browne. *Matinée.* St. George's Hall.
 „ 28 "Pedigree," three act comedy, by C. C. Bowring and F. H. Court. *Matinée.* Toole's.
 „ 29* "Henry IV." (Part I) Shakespeare's historical play in five acts, acted by the Irving Amateur Dramatic Club. *Matinée.* Lyceum.
 „ 29 "For Her Child's Sake," dramatic episode in one act, by the late Sir Charles Young, Bart. (First time in evening bill). Terry's.
 April 1* "Is Madame at Home ?" adaptation from the French, by Minnie Bell. *Matinée.* Steinway Hall.
 „ 1 "The Gavotte," adaptation from the French, by Minnie Bell. *Matinée.* Steinway Hall.
 „ 3 "A Village Priest," play in five acts, by Sydney Grundy (suggested by the French play *Le Secret de la Terreuse*). Haymarket.
 „ 5 "Dick Venables," drama in four acts, written by Arthur Law. Shaftesbury.
 „ 5 "The Sentry," musical vaudeville, in one act, by Felix Rémo and Malcolm Watson, music by Ivan Caryll. Lyric.
 „ 7 "Nixie," three act play, by Mrs. Hodgson Burnett and Stephen Townsend. *Matinée.* Terry's.
 „ 7 "Domestic Economy," new comic operetta, by F. C. Burnand and Edward Solomon. Comedy.

- April "Carnival Time," new piece in one act, written by Malcolm Watson, music by Corney Grain. St. George's Hall.
- " 9 "Released," drama in one act, by Charles H. Dickinson. *Matinée*. Comedy.
- " 9* "April Showers," three act comedy, by Messrs. Romer and Bellamy. *Matinée*. Comedy.
- " 12 "The Prince and the Pauper," play in four acts, by Mrs. Oscar Beringer (founded on Mark Twain's story of the same name) *Matinée*. Gaiety.
- " 14 "All a Mistake," one act comedietta, by Mrs. Newton Phillips. Ladbroke Hall.
- " 15* "She Stoops to Conquer." Goldsmith's comedy in five acts. *Matinée*. Vaudeville.
- " 17 "Cerise and Co.," original farcical comedy in three acts, by Mrs. Musgrave. *Matinée*. Prince of Wales's.
- " 17 "The Linendraper," serio-farcical comedy, in three acts, written by J. R. Brown and F. Thornthwaite. *Matinée*. Comedy.
- " 19* "The Green Bushes." J. B. Buckstone's drama in three acts. Adelphi.

In the Provinces from March 15, 1890, to April 14, 1890.

- Mar. 20 "Ruth," new and original play, written in a prologue, and three acts. by A. Bright and Jerome K. Jerome (for copyright purposes), Prince's Theatre, Bristol.
- " 24 "The New Mazeppa," written in a prologue and three acts, by Fred. Cooke and F. Waldron. Morton's Theatre, Greenwich.
- " 26* "Venus," burlesque in three acts, by Edward Rose and Augustus Harris, re-written up to date by William Yardley. Prince of Wales', Liverpool.
- " 28 "The Battle Through Life," original melodrama in five acts, by W. H. Mitchell. Royal, Barnsley.
- " 28 "Cissy," musical comedy in three acts, by W. H. Dearlove and Miss Jennie Franklin, R.A.M. Town Hall Theatre, Harrogate.
- April 5 "The Bailiff," original domestic one act play, by Fred. W. Broughton. T.R., Bath.
- " 5 "Nap; or, a Midsummer's Night's Scream," original burlesque, by Stanley Rogers, music by G. Salmon and Martin Adeson. T.R., Blyth.
- " 7 "Guy Fawkes, Esq.," original three act burlesque, written by A. C. Torr and Herbert Clark, lyrics by Mr. Marshall. T.R., Nottingham.
- " 7 "Flashes," "farcical hilarity," in three acts, by J. J. Hewson and E. Lewis West. New T.R., Everton.
- " 7* "Namesakes," farce by Horace Lennard. Opening of New Theatre Richmond, Surrey.
- " 14 "Phyllis," nautical comedy opera, by M. Blatchford; music by A. T. M'Evoy. T.R., Halifax.

In Paris from March 13, 1890, to April 12, 1890,

- Mar. 13 "Le Fetiche," operetta in three acts, libretto by Paul Ferrier and Charles Clairville, music by Victor Roger. Menus-Plaisirs.
- " 15 "L'Œuf Rouge," comic opera, in three acts, words by M.M. Busnach and Vanloo, music by Edmond Audran. Folies-Dramatiques.
- " 29 "La Vocation de Marius," piece in three acts, by Fabrice Carré and Albert Debelly, music by Raoul Tugno. Nouveautés.
- " 22 "Les Miettes de l'Anneé," *revue* in three acts, by Blum and Toché. Palais Royal.
- " 29 "Maraskine," comedy in one act, by George Maurens and Charles Rousseau. Dejazet.
- April 1 "La Clef du Paradis," three act vaudeville, by Chivot and Duru. Renaissance.
- " 2 "L'Enlèvement de Sabine," three act farcical comedy, by Léon Gandillot. Cluny.

- April 5 "Les Grandes Manœuvres," two act comedy, by Hippolyte Raymond and Albert de Saint-Albin. Variétés.
,, 11 "Le Crime de Jean Morel," five act drama, by Lucien Cressonpois and Charles Samson. Chateau D'Eau.
,, 12 "La Vie à Deux," three act comedy, by Henry Bocage and Charles de Courcy. Odéon.
-

Mr. Pinero's new play, "The Cabinet Minister," was produced on April 23, at the Court Theatre. The play—full of the author's most witty talk—is a very sketchy one, and will have to be in some measure condensed before it can become the success it deserves. However, as a critical notice will appear in our next issue it is not necessary for us to say more at present. The plot turns upon the monetary trials and anxieties of the minister's wife, who has somehow got mixed up in the matter of accommodation bills with those parasites of society, successful tradespeople, in this case a fashionable milliner and her bill-discounting brother. But, at last the minister's wife, by a successful speculation on the Stock Exchange is enabled to throw over her tormentors, and thus restore the fortunes of her house. Mrs. John Wood is very funny as the Cabinet Minister's wife, Mr. Arthur Cecil enacted the Cabinet Minister, and Miss Rosina Filippi and Mr. Weedon Grossmith respectively played the fashionable milliner and the money-lending brother.



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Seott, Mr. Clement	January, 1886	Vanbrugh, Miss Violet	July, 1887
Sims, G. R.	July, 1884	Venne, Miss Lottie	June, 1889
Standing, Herbert	November, 1883	Vezin, Hermann	July, 1883
Stephens, Mr. Yorke	July, 1886	Wadman, Miss.	October, 1888
Stirling, Mrs.	June, 1883	Waller, Mr. Lewis	April, 1887
Tempest, Miss Marie	July, 1888	Wallis, M ss.	January, 1889
Terriss, Miss Ellaline	May, 1889	Ward, Mr. E. D.	April, "
Terriss, Mr. Wm.	June, 1883—January, 1885	Warden, Miss Florence	July, 1885
Terry, Miss Ellen	July, 1883	Warner, Mr. Charles	December, "
*Terry, Miss Marion	February, 1883—July, 1889	Watson, Mr. Alfred	April, 1886
Terry, Miss Minnie	November, "	West, Miss Florence	September, 1885
Thomas, Mr. Brandon	March, 1887	Willard, F. S.	August, 1883—March, 1888
Thomas, Mr. Moy	July, 1885	Williams, Arthur	May, 1888
Thompson, Miss Lydia	January, 1886	Wood, Mrs. John	December, 1888
Thorn, Mr. Thos.	March, 1885	Woodworth, Miss Edith	November, 1882
Tilbury, Miss	May, "	Wyndham, Charles	July, 1888

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MISS SYLVIA GREY AND MR. JEROME K. JEROME.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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THE THEATRE.



An Irritating Romance.

BY JESSIE BOND.



O the authorship of this story I lay no claim whatever. I merely reproduce a tale which I heard under the following circumstances. I may add that the narrator subsequently looked over my manuscript, made many corrections and many more additions, and then gave me full permission to make any use of the MS. I liked. I should not even now take advantage of the permission accorded were it not that I have recently heard of his death, and therefore I have no reason any longer to withhold a story which otherwise must remain untold—not that I think it would be any great loss if such were the case.

It was Good Friday, and Good Friday, especially when wet, is not a cheerful day. I know it is not intended to be so. To members of the theatrical profession it is doubly dreary, for not only is it a day of enforced idleness, but it reduces Saturday's treasury by one-sixth.

Mrs. Blank's Bloomsbury Boarding House was, therefore, if possible, a shade more depressed than usual; dinner was over, and it was not yet seven o'clock. The boarders had found their way into the drawing room, and, seated round the fire, were vainly endeavouring to be entertaining and communicative, but each well-meant effort to start some generally interesting topic of conversation fell flat and ended in dismal failure, so that serious thoughts of bed, even at that early hour, were not absent from the minds of the assembled company.

If there was one boarder more taciturn than another, and less given to expressing an opinion unasked, or hazarding a remark, that one was Captain Bangalore, formerly of H.M. Indian Staff Corps. Great, therefore, was the astonishment depicted on every countenance when that bilious, but doubtless gallant, officer, growled out an offer to tell a story—a true story—something within his own knowledge which had happened when, home on furlough from India, he had, in 1870, joined a field ambulance, and was serving with the French Army during the great Franco-German war.

Captain Bangalore's offer was received with a chorus of approval, and so without further preface he began :—

“The rumours of possible war between France and Germany in the summer of 1870 were followed so quickly by the clash of arms in the latter days of July, that only those who were quick to decide and prompt in action stood any chance of witnessing the opening scenes of that colossal struggle.

I had friends highly placed and of no little influence with the Imperial Government, which then controlled the destinies of France. Hastening to Paris, I was so far successful that my services were provisionally accepted as a volunteer, with one of the Field Ambulances which the *Société Française de Secours* was then rapidly organising for service with the different Corps d'Armée.

My wish was to get to the frontier, where the first battles would certainly be fought, but in this I was disappointed, and found myself relegated to comparative inaction at the large standing Camp of Chalons. I have no intention of giving you any account of the war itself, but merely propose to relate a curious incident in which I was involved. Suffice it then to say that as disaster followed disaster to the French arms, I was ordered from one part of the country to another, and eventually found myself with the army of General F——, in the North of France, the headquarters of which were, at that time, at Rouen.

You may perhaps have heard of those irregular troops of volunteers, which were raised and organised by anyone having sufficient energy to take the initiative, and known as “Franc-tireurs” which may be roughly rendered as Free Lances. They were armed and clothed by the Government (the Government of National Defence), and rations, when rations were forthcoming, were supplied to them. The idea was that these bands of volunteers should act locally, because, knowing every inch of the country where they were raised, they could harass the enemy, by their very looseness of organisation and irresponsibility to any but their own elected leaders, more effectually than regular troops. The Germans at first refused to recognise them as legitimate combatants, and gave notice that they would be treated as armed civilians, which was tantamount to saying that they would get but a short shrift should they unfortunately fall into the hands of the enemy. Each one, therefore, knew that he carried his life in his hands. The discipline was at one and the same time lax and severe—lax as regards behaviour to the inhabitants of the village which they from time to time occupied, severe in regard to behaviour affecting the band or corps of which they formed part.

The winter of 1870 was almost Russian in its intensity, and in December the whole country was deep in snow round about Rouen, where everything was at that time at sixes and sevens. No one apparently knew where the enemy was or where he was likely to be met.

It was already dark one afternoon, and I was comfortably ensconced at the Hotel d'Angleterre, sitting over a big fire and

chatting with the younger officers of the General's staff, when an orderly brought me instructions to take a couple of ambulance waggons and proceed at once to a spot about five leagues distant on the road to Paris, where I was informed I should find in a farm-house a company of Franc-tireurs, who had been recently engaged in a skirmish with some German Uhlans and had suffered considerably. The enemy had been driven back, but there were eight or ten wounded men, Frenchmen, who required assistance. Medical aid there was none, and all I had to do was to get the sufferers into Rouen as quickly as I could. I endeavoured to obtain a map of the country to guide me in my search for the farm (the name of which no one knew), but without avail. I managed to get the ambulance waggons harnessed and, after much trouble, procured a couple of drivers, Rouen cabbies, as also two bearers from the Ambulance Sédentaire or stationary hospital in the town. With these, and mounting a sorry jade that no one had yet thought fit to requisition, I started on my quest. It was a bright moonlight night and bitterly cold, how many degrees of frost I cannot say, and there was a keen north wind blowing ; nevertheless, after some six hours' journeying and many mishaps, including one or two stray shots from over-zealous sentries, I arrived at the place to which I had been ordered. To call it a farm-house was gross flattery, as it was little more than a barn, and was occupied by about twenty men of a corp of Franc-tireurs from E——, who seemed as reckless and careless about disclosing their whereabouts to the enemy as it is possible to conceive. I found the wounded, some of them lying on heaps of straw in the corners of the building, untended, whilst others were able to sit up on such improvised seats as a few barrels and packing cases afforded. A large fire had been lighted on the mud floor of the barn, and a hole made in the roof to allow the smoke to escape, and candles were not wanting ; the building therefore was plainly visible from a considerable distance. It was absolutely necessary to give the horses some rest and food before attempting the return journey, and whilst this was being done I took stock of the occupants of this very advanced post. They were a motley crew—ill-favoured and noisy, and the usual fingering of a grimy pack of cards was going on amid much wrangling. Two of the company, however, attracted my attention from the first moment, one of whom, although he, like the rest, carried a short rifle, wore on his sort of half uniform Norfolk jacket a thin line of gold braid, which seemed to indicate some one in authority, perhaps an officer.

He was evidently a different stamp of man to most of his comrades, doubtless a gentleman by birth, and about thirty-five to forty years of age. The other was a mere lad, not more than seventeen or eighteen, and wounded. A blood-stained handkerchief was bound round his head, but he made light of the mishap and was sipping his coffee and rolling a cigarette as I entered the building. The two were seated close together and somewhat removed from their comrades. I gave such simple aid as I could to those who were more grievously

hurt—there were one or two serious cases—and then I offered to do the same for the youngster, who, however, declined politely but firmly my proffered assistance. His friend also seemed to resent my advances, so I drew away and, getting into conversation with the others, learnt from them some of the particulars of the skirmish of the previous day which had put so many *hors de combat*.

It still wanted some hours to daylight when I thought it advisable to commence the return journey with my convoy of wounded, who by this time were stowed away in the two ambulance waggons.

I was in the act of saying good-bye to the officer before mentioned, who had been watching my movements, and held his extended hand as he stood at the entrance to the building in the full glare of the fire-light from within, when some little commotion was caused by his young friend, who had been standing close to him, suddenly reeling and falling heavily to the ground. I half expected to hear the crack of a rifle follow, as I thought he had been shot, thus paying the penalty of the utter want of precaution to remain concealed from the enemy. I was wrong, however; the boy had merely fainted from weakness. I at once gave orders to have room made for him in the ambulance, and despite the protests of the officer carried him off with me.

The rate of progress was extremely moderate; the roads were deep in snow, the horses none too fresh, and the load heavy. I did not therefore lose sight of the barn, lighted up as it was, for some considerable time, and, having nothing particular to occupy my mind, fell to musing on the extraordinary ignorance of the simplest rules of warfare displayed by these very irregular troops. It was so plainly inviting attack to make the post a very beacon to the surrounding country. The more I thought of it the more puzzled I became, until my reflections were turned into another channel by one of the horses casting a shoe. We were fortunately just entering a village, and, having managed to discover the smithy and rouse the smith, I proceeded, whilst the mishap was being remedied, to have a look at those under my care, and found the young Franc-tireur, who had recovered consciousness, sitting up in the waggon. I bade him lie down again, telling him we should be off directly, and then retired to the smithy. Ten minutes later I was able to give the word to proceed, and, after an uneventful journey, by ten o'clock the following morning I had my waggons within the gates of the chief hospital in Rouen.

As the wounded were removed one by one and carried into the building I checked the numbers; one was missing, and it was the young Franc-tireur.

I reported the circumstance at once, after enquiring of those who had been in the same waggon if and when he had got out and where, but could get no reliable information; they had not, they said, noticed him, and, in fact, were ignorant that he had formed one of the party. No attention was vouchsafed to the matter by the authorities, and, as it did not concern me any longer, I did not press it.

A couple of days later I was again ordered away with my waggons, this time to carry medical comforts to the advanced guard of a portion of the army marching on to Amiens. Missing my road I fell into the clutches of the enemy and was promptly taken before the Commandant to give an account of myself. He was not a polite specimen of the conquering host, and treated me brusquely; he declined to talk in French or English—perhaps he couldn't—and, after a good deal of abuse in his native tongue, much to the apparent amusement of the bevy of officers who were looking on, he called for Lieutenant Von — to act as interpreter. A young officer stepped smartly to the front and, giving a half salute while a smile played over his features, said in excellent English, "What is it you wish to explain to the Commandant?" I was about to answer, when in my interrogator I recognised the young Franc-tireur, notwithstanding his present smart German uniform and the absence of any bandage to his head or indication that he had been wounded; he looked in fact the picture of health. I was dumbfounded, and could hardly believe my eyes, but he soon removed any doubt by saying, "All's fair in war, you know." Then turning to his comrades he added something in German which I did not understand, but which was greeted with a roar of laughter. I was not in the best of tempers, and I have no doubt I showed it, but restraining my first impulse to retort on the author of the trick played on me, and of the deceit practised on the Franc-tireurs, I contented myself with replying, "No doubt, as you say, all is fair in war; will you be good enough to explain to the Commandant that under the Geneva Convention I claim freedom from arrest for myself and my party, and that I shall be glad to be allowed to depart at once." "Let me offer you some refreshment; one good turn deserves another, and you were very kindly disposed to me when you deemed me wounded, and a Frenchman." I declined the proffered invitation somewhat stiffly, and reiterated my demand to be allowed to depart at once. "As you please," and my request was interpreted to the Commandant, who roared out, "Take him away with his carts, and set him on the direct road to Rouen, and see that he takes it!" then turning his back on me without another word he seemed to forget my existence.

My young, I had almost said friend, seemed vexed. "I am sorry for this," said he, "but it cannot be helped, and I advise you to get away quickly, or I fear even the Geneva Convention may not prove sufficient to protect you from annoyance." Then raising his voice he called out, "Send Corporal B—— here!" In perhaps a couple of minutes the Corporal made his appearance rifle in hand, pickel haube on his head, ready to march. Directing him to carry out the Commandant's instructions, Lieut. Von — gravely bade me adieu, adding, "If we ever meet again I may have an opportunity of satisfying your evident curiosity, which at present time does not permit. Until then, adieu," and raising his forefingers to his cap he also turned away, and I was left with my ambulance carts in charge of Corporal B——. "En avant, mes amis," cried the Corporal in tones

which caused me to scan him more closely, and then to recognise him whom I had seen not a week previously in a French uniform as the leader of the little band of Franc-tireurs. Seeing that concealment was useless, he anticipated any questions I might put by saying, "It will be wiser I think not to talk," and in complete silence he escorted me beyond the German outposts.

It was plainly my duty to report the matter without delay, so, leaving my waggons in charge of my assistant, to Rouen I went as fast as my unhappy quadruped could carry me. It so happened that the E—— Franc-tireurs were at that time in Rouen, and I learnt from them that one of their officers had disappeared; they supposed he must have lost his way one night and been taken prisoner or shot. He had not been long with them, having joined the band only a few days before I first met them. He had come armed with a letter from the General strongly recommending him as a very useful officer, although a stranger to that part of the country. There was a vacancy and he was accordingly installed without more ado. He also brought with him a young recruit. The skirmish with the party of Uhlans followed almost immediately, in which the youngster was said to be wounded, and later the supposed death or capture of the officer himself. That was all that was known. On this information I made my report, and was considerably laughed at for my pains. I returned to my ambulance waggons, effected my mission, and about a fortnight later found myself again in Rouen. There was some little commotion in the main street. A regiment was entering the town bringing in German prisoners. Now a German prisoner was an unusual sight, therefore the excitement had risen to fever height. On came the battalion, trumpets blowing and the populace cheering, and in the middle surrounded by a guard were the prisoners—two only—and in the dress of French peasants, not of German soldiers. One glance was sufficient; they were identical with the missing Franc-tireurs and the German Lieutenant and Corporal. As they marched through the town towards the prison the E—— Franc-tireurs recognised them, and the cry of "Prussian spies" began to be heard. Soon it was known that spies they were, and a summary court martial was immediately assembled to dispose of them. My unfortunate report caused me to be the first witness, and I knew my evidence meant death. I gave it, I told all I knew; the accused asked no questions, made no sign and offered no explanations. 'Guilty, and sentence of death' was an affair of twenty minutes. The execution was ordered for the following morning at daybreak on the Place, and, as fate would have it, I was detailed to attend to remove the remains.

At the time appointed a squad of men was drawn up to fire the volley that was to finish once and for ever the masquerading propensities of the two Germans. Presently the escort and prisoners arrived, and the latter proceeded at once to remove their blouses and to submit to have their eyes bandaged. There they were sure enough, two prisoners in the costume of French peasants, but they were not the Germans whom I expected. I went up at once to the

officer in command of the firing party and told him so ; he replied it had nothing at all to do with him—he had orders to “faire fusiller” two men—two men were brought to him for that purpose and shot they assuredly would be. Remonstrance was useless, the prisoners took their places, the firing party came to the ready, the officer raised his sword, and, as he did so, they raised their rifles and took aim then, on the officer dropping his sword sharply, the rattle of the volley followed and justice was done, not on the German spies but on two French deserters.

By this time I began to think I had interfered enough, so I held my peace and carted off the mortal remains of the Frenchmen. Everything must have an end, even a Franco-German war, and by March, '71, I was back again in England, and three months later once more in India, from which I returned a couple of years ago. On my way home I made a short European tour, and in due course found myself in Berlin just at the time that the old Emperor was about to hold one of those reviews of his troops in which he so much delighted. I had obtained a good point of vantage, from which to see the march past, when a staff officer rode up and very politely asked me in English if I would not like to get nearer the head-quarter staff, and so see still better. I at once accepted the kind offer, and found myself in the middle of a crowd of big-wigs. I was at a loss to understand why I had been selected for this mark of attention, and imagined I must have been mistaken for someone of importance, when my guide said, “I see you don't remember me. Have you forgotten the E—— Franc-tireurs and the two German spies who were shot one fine morning in the Place at Rouen ? By-the-bye,” added he, “were they shot ? I never heard authoritatively ;” then handing me a slip of paper, on which he had pencilled an address, he said, “Do me the favour to come and dine with me to-morrow ; ask for Colonel Von ——, and you shall hear all you possibly want to know about those gentlemen. Corporal B—— shall also be there to meet you, only you must call him Major now,” and off he galloped.

Now comes the most annoying part of the story. I lost the card with the address on it, and, as I had to leave Berlin the next day, I never cleared up the mystery that surrounds the whole matter.”

“Is that all ?” burst simultaneously from the lips of the company. “Don't you know who they were, and how they got there and how they escaped ?”

“I know nothing more than I have told you, and I made no enquiries. I can understand your astonishment and incredulity, which would be less if you could realise the confusion that prevailed at that time among the French. The enemy occupied Rouen very shortly afterwards, and doubtless the two Germans managed to lie concealed somewhere until then.”

“What an irritating and disappointing story ! However, it is ten o'clock now, so good-night,” and the circle broke up.

In my opinion the E.I. warrior was romancing, and started a story which he didn't know how to finish, but it helped to get over Good Friday.

Annals of the Bath Stage.

A history of the drama in Bath, from the earliest times, with some account of its representative actors, actresses, authors, musicians, painters, &c., including many diverting anecdotes, pleasant criticisms, and entertaining memoirs.

BY WALTER CALVERT.



BATH, above all cities in the Empire, relies for its prosperity upon the attractions it offers to visitors, and, as no amusement has stronger claims than the drama, it is not surprising that the history of its stage is associated with the greatest names, and many of the most remarkable incidents connected with the English theatre. It is somewhat curious to note that none of the local historians has undertaken to record the chronicles of the play-actors who have appeared on the Bath boards, of whom, it may be said, we have heard so much and read so little, and it is reserved for readers of this magazine to peruse this first *complete* history of the Bath Stage, which, if it is not as it might have been, from the wealth of materials at command, is not so owing to the limited space at the writer's disposal. For the convenience of those who desire to refer to the details, necessarily omitted here, copious reference is made by footnotes to the authorities that have been consulted.

PART I.

THE EARLY ENGLISH PERIOD—A.D. 1300—1600.

The dramatic entertainments of Bath are of great antiquity, and seem to have exhibited there as early as the reign of Edward III. From some items in the accounts of the churchwardens of St. Michael's Without the Walls*, Warner infers that the church of that parish was occasionally made the theatre of those sacred dramas known first by the name of Miracles, afterwards of Mysteries, and in the subsequent times by that of Moralities. The items are these :

Dat. Lusoribus Glouc.	...	...	...	...	iis. iiid.
Solut Mimis de Glouc in Die-Corp Christi.	...	...	...	...	xiid.

* These curious original rolls are in the possession of the churchwardens of St. Michael's parish. Notices of other superstitious practices occur in the same rolls ; amongst them is an item of payment for Watching the Sepulchre. This was a ceremony performed on Good Friday, when a small building was erected in the church, which represented the sepulchre of our Saviour ; the consecrated Host was placed in this, and a person set to watch the same during Friday night, the ensuing day, and Saturday night. Early on the Sunday morning the Host was taken out with much rejoicing, and Christ was said to be risen from the dead.—"History of Bath."—*Rev. R. Warner*, 1801.

That is :—*Paid to the Players of Gloucester, two shillings and fourpence; and to the Mummers of the same place, on Corpus Christi, one shilling.* To understand these particulars clearly we must recollect that it was customary with our ancestors, as far back as the twelfth century, to perform religious dramas in their churches and in the consecrated ground surrounding them. These consisted of representations of scripture histories, and of miracles which had been worked by the saints, or the sufferings undergone by martyrs; and were sometimes accompanied by explanatory dialogue, and at others confined merely to pantomimical action.

In that inimitable piece of humour, the prologue to “The Wife of Bath’s Tale,” we find the gay matron indulging herself, during the absence of her spouse in London, in these performances :

“Therefore made I my visitations
To Prechings eke, and to Pilgrimages,
To Plays of Miracles, and Mariages.”

If Chaucer intended to describe her as then residing in her native town, this account of her amusement in Lent would throw some light on what is said above relative to the ancient representations in St. Michael’s Church. Although these entertainments were debased by the introduction of mummerly and farce, and sometimes dishonoured by the admixture of gross indecencies, yet their attractions and popularity arose to such a height as at length rendered it necessary for the ecclesiastical power to interfere in their suppression. The profanity, blasphemy, and licentious indecency of these representations were such that, so late as 1542, Bishop Bonner had occasion to issue a proclamation to the clergy prohibiting “all manner of common plays, games or interludes, to be played, set forth, or delivered within their churches and chapels;” consequently, when the Itinerant Mimes, or Strolling Histriones visited the city they, like Thespis of old, performed from waggons, or in little temporary boot’s, erected for the purpose; paying at the same time to the corporation a stipulated fee for the permission of acting. In addition to the strolling actors, against whom, however, a clause in the Vagrant Act† was directed, it became the fashion for the leaders of fashion to keep their own companies of players, who performed under their protection.

THE MUNICIPAL RECORDS.

The Municipal Records of Bath show us that the noblemen often took their companies, in the course of a provincial tour, to the western city to display their talents to the fashionable, and no doubt

† “The Act 39, Eliz., c. 4, forbids ‘all fencers, berewards, common players of interludes, and minstrells wandering abroad, other than players of interludes belonging to anie Baron of this realm, or anie other honourable person of great degree to bee authorised to play under the hand and seal of such a baron or personage. The punishment is, to be stripped naked from the middle upwards, and be openly whipped till his or her bodie be bloudie.”—The Municipal Records of Bath—*Messrs. King and Watts.*

Back and side go bare, go bare,
Both foot and hand go cold,
But belly, God send thee good ale enough,
Whether it be new or old.

The comedy was published in 1575, and appears to be the first existing English play that was acted at either university ; and it is a singular coincidence that its author should have been the very same person who, many years after, when become Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge, was called upon to remonstrate with Queen Elizabeth's ministers against having an English play performed before her at that university, so unbefitting its learning, dignity, and character.

SHAKESPEARE AND HIS COMRADES.

As Shakespeare was a member of Lord Strange's players¶ several writers infer that he may have accompanied them to Bath on the occasion of their visit, as recorded in the municipal Rolls of 1593 and 1597, and made the acquaintance of the city, both as strolling actor and dramatic author. In an article which appeared in the *Contemporary Review*, the writer, the Very Rev. Dr. Plumptre, Dean of Wells, says :—

"I find that in the summer of 1593, the London theatres were closed on account of the prevalence of the plague, and that Shakespeare's friend, Edward Alleyn, afterwards memorable as the founder of Dulwich College, was at Bath in the August of that year. With him were travelling other members of Lord Strange's company of actors—Kempe, Pope, Hemmings, Philips and Brian, with a license from the Privy Council, authorising them to play 'where the infection was not.' This was the company to which Shakespeare belonged, and the absence of his name, and those of others, from the license is naturally explained by the fact that he was not as yet a shareholder in the company. We trace the movement of that company in the course of the year to Chelmsford, in May ; Bath and Bristol in July ; and afterwards to Shrewsbury, Chester, and York. . . . Shakespeare was hardly likely at that stage of his progress, and with his mind bent on professional success, to have separated himself from his comrades."

It may have been that Shakespeare did not travel with the company, but remained in the metropolis for the purpose of quietly pursuing his literary studies, and proceeding with his sonnets and poems. His "*Venus and Adonis*" was published in 1593, and the late Mr. Halliwell-Phillips thinks it very likely "that Shakespeare was in town when his manuscript was at the printers, and not impossible that he glanced over the proof sheets, besides superintending the general arrangements of the work." In the same year, or the following one, appeared that charming comedy "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*," and Dean Plumptre suggests, as a matter for enquiry, "whether its fairy scenes may not have been based on the folk-lore of Somerset, whether the picture of the altered seasons and disastrous rains, and the sea born "contagious fogs," may not have

¶ "This company of players had previously belonged to the Earl of Leicester, but on his demise in 1588, they found a new patron in Lord Strange. On the death of that nobleman in 1594, it became known as Lord Hunsdon's Company, and took the title of the Lord Chamberlain's Company, a name which they retained till the accession of King James, in 1603, when they became the King's servants."

been drawn from the scenes which met the poet's eye in the valley of the Avon in 1593 (a year almost as disastrous as 1594), whether the prototypes of Bottom and his friend may not have been found in the provincial performers, with whom the travels of Lord Strange's company brought him in contact."

Even supposing, however, that the theory of the poet having been in Bath in 1593 is not sustained, there are still grounds for believing that Bath was honoured by his presence in 1597. In the "Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare," the author says:—

Early in the year 1597, on New Year's Day, Twelfth Night, Shrove Sunday, and Shrove Tuesday, Shakespeare's company again performed before the Queen at Whitehall. In the summer they made a tour through Sussex and Kent, visiting Rye in August, and acting at Dover on the 3rd of September. In their progress to the latter town, he, who was hereafter to be the author of "Lear," might have witnessed, and been impressed with the samphire gatherers on the celebrated rock that was to be regarded the type of Edger's imaginary precipice. By the end of the same month they had quitted the southern counties, and travelled westward as far as Bristol.

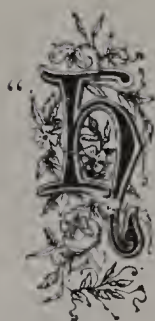
In journeying to or returning from that city they would doubtlessly pass through Bath and give a performance. This supposition is confirmed by the City Rolls in October of that year, when the company, of which Shakespeare was a member, was paid the sum of twenty shillings. At this period Bath was rapidly growing to be a place of repute. Families of rank and valetudinarians visited it for the benefit of the waters. Leland had described the Baths, two treatises had been written upon the springs, Spencer had mentioned the city several times in his "Faerie Queen," his patroness, Queen Elizabeth, had visited it on two occasions, a map of the city had been published—facts which naturally increased its popularity and prosperity. What more likely, then, that Shakespeare should have accompanied his associates to a city so interesting and so much frequented by rival companies.

To be continued.



“ Adsum ! ”

BY E. A. FRANCIS.



OW is he, nurse ?” “ He’s right
Bad, sir. I seem to dread
But he’ll slip away in the night ;
Since noon he’s been light in his head.
He’s been talking strangely, too,
About some new play. He said
He was tired, waiting for you.”

“ I am so glad you have come ;
All the long afternoon
I have heard the rattle and hum
Of wheels, and men, in the Strand.
I felt you would be here soon.
Give hold, my boy, of your hand ;
“ We have never missed one ‘ first ’ yet,
I shouldn’t enjoy it alone.
Do you think you will ever forget
The time when we met in that crush ?
How aged our friendship has grown—
Is that the music ? Hush !—

“ Why don’t they light up the gas ?
They oughtn’t to mind, I am sure,
A little expense, with this mass
Of folk waiting here. But how fine,
My boy, to be first—with the door
At one’s back. It is simply a score
To get at the head of this line.
“ We shall have a glorious seat !
Yet I’m glad that it’s growing late,
For right from my head to my feet
I can feel the effect of the cram.
It’s worth the long weary wait
To get here so close to the gate.
But, oh ! how tired I am.”

"It must be near time. It's so dark
 Here now. And the pressure has grown
 So bad - - - Ah!—that's better. Hark!
 Stand close : here they come !"

A sigh—
 A turn of the head—A moan—
 The Angel of Death swept by—
 And he went to the play alone.



A Provincial at the Play.

II.

November 25, 1852.



HAVE to write myself down a defaulter. My rule is to take notes of every performance at the time. If exceptions prove the rule, my rule is proved by two exceptionable omissions, both of which are to me matters of regret, for the dates are those of two exceptionally enjoyable nights at the play. And to one in good health, and good spirits, and good company, how enjoyable a thing a good play is !—nay, the mere aspect of a good house, before the play begins.

Yes, I beheld the old accustom'd sight,
 Pit, boxes, galleries ; I was at " the play,"
 I saw uprise the stage's strange floor-day,
 Heard music—tuning as in tune's despite ;
 Childhood I saw, glad-faced, that squeezeth tight
 One's hand, while the rapt curtain soars away,—
 And beauty and age, and all that piled array—
 Thousands of souls drawn to one wise delight.

If I do not add to the two enjoyable exceptions aforesaid a third one, in the case to-night of "The Merry Wives of Windsor," revived for the sake of Bartley's farewell performances at the Princess's, it is because my enjoyment in this instance was marred by my going to see it after the secession of the Keeleys from the Keans—for by this belated visit I have missed not only Keeley as Parson Evans, and Mrs. Keeley as Mistress Page, but also Alfred Wigan as Doctor Caius—a triplet of misses indeed ! Meadows, who heretofore had played

Justice Shallow, to-night undertook Sir Hugh ; and Meadows is such a favourite of mine in small parts, that the hardest thing I can find it in me to say of him is, that in the Welsh parson he was not Keeley. Nor was H. Saker (from Edinburgh) less inferior to Meadows as the Justice, than was Meadows to Keeley as the Curate—but distinctly more so. For Alfred Wigan as the choleric Frenchman, there was a Mr. Leclercq, the father of Columbine Carlotta—and his French and broken English seemed to me unexceptionable, if his acting was not, though he played very creditably to my thinking, so that the duel scene with Sir Hugh was diverting in the extreme, nor less so the subsequent interchange of endearments and embracements by the doughty pair. Bartley's Falstaff was none too redolent of comedy, it was lacking in invention and drollery, and upon the whole disappointed me in so excellent an actor, whose retirement is a sensible loss to the stage. Still more disappointed was I with Mrs. C. Kean's Mistress Ford ; so ungraceful was her make-up, so artificial her merriment, so altogether thin her looks, her person, and performance. Anything but thin, on the other hand, was Mrs. Winstanley's Mistress Page ; so buxom, blithe, and debonair,—the physique, plump and handsome, the sense of enjoyment genuine, the laughter infectious in its uncontrollable escapades. Mrs. Daly's gasp, or catch in the breath, spoils for me any and every part she appears in, her Mistress Quickly of course included. James Vining was genial as ever in Master Page ; Addison was duly or unduly blustering and boisterous as Mine Host ; Harley did *not* make me laugh as Slender ; Ryder made nothing of Pistol, though Paulo made the most of Bardolph ; and while little Kate Terry made a dapper page, Charles Kean was the best comedian of the lot as the jealous husband, to whose petulant perplexities he did the fullest justice, with an air of amaze that was irresistibly absurd, and made of the little man a veritable figure of fun.

Care to see him again in tragedy I cannot, having seen his Hamlet and Macbeth. To see Macready in comedy I could have cared very much—in Benedick, for example, or as Mr. Oakley in "The Jealous Wife," or as Mr. Harmony in "Every One Has His Fault"—in all of which characters he had made his mark.* Even in tragedy, however, I never saw Macready but once, and that was on one of the two exceptional occasions when, to my regret and against my wont, I omitted taking and making notes, fresh and full, at the very time. The time of this particular performance was nearly two years ago, viz., 13th January, 1851 ; it was during Macready's farewell appearances at the Haymarket, and by chance the tragedy was "King Lear." Chance apart, that would have been my choice, too, had it been given me to choose, as a last chance, in which of all his parts to see him. What perhaps I remember best, and

* He also once contemplated doing Jack Lofty, in "The Good-Natured Man," for his benefit I think ; and it might have been a very palpable hit, or it might have been, perhaps he thought, a mortifying miss—not for his benefit.—TR.



Miss SYLVIA GREY.

" . . . She dances featly : so she does anything."

—" WINTER'S TALE," act iv., sc. 3.

what thrilled me most, was in the recognition and reconciliation scene with Cordelia (Miss Reynolds), when the discrowned, distraught, distressed old father, prostrate on his couch, and but half awakened from medicinal sleep, cannot resist the surmise—though they may laugh at him for the extravagance of it—"but, as I am a man, I think this lady to be my child Cordelia." "And so I am, I am!" is the responsive cry of that child, as she flings herself on his upraised form. Miss P. Horton played the Fool as if, like Lear, she loved him, and, like Shakespeare, understood his fooling. Mrs. Warner had the thankless part of Goneril, and Leicester Buckingham's handsome wife did Regan about as well as, ethically if not histrionically, that atrocious creature deserved. Howe was the Edmund, and the noble-hearted Edgar was represented with picturesque art and fervour by E. H. Davenport. The Steward was entrusted to C. Selby, and Stuart played either Kent or Gloster; but who it was that played the other of the two stalwart earls has escaped my memory—whence the inference, which if unsatisfactory is conclusive, that he must have been not very impressive, or else I very forgetful.

The other exceptional night in question was some three years previously, viz., 27th April, 1848, when at the Lyceum I so thoroughly enjoyed "The Rough Diamond," as embodied in Mrs. Fitzwilliam, with the author to back her, and Mrs. Leigh Murray in high relief; followed by the gracefully good-tasty burlesque, "Theseus and Ariadne," hero and heroine by Vestris and Kathleen Fitzwilliam, with the perfection of burlesque carolling by both, as regards alike charm of voice and of style; while Charles Mathews pattered and clattered to the top of his bent as Chorus, and concluded the night's entertainment by his finished artistic impersonation of Lavater in "Not a Bad Judge," ably supported by such veteran practitioners as Harley and Meadows, with the set-off of youth and comeliness in Miss Louisa Howard. If all from first to last seemed extra bright that evening, I suppose the cause was partly, not to say mainly, in myself. I was in the mood to enjoy it all. Companionship and conditions precedent had quickened my capacity of enjoyment. On no other night have I felt such a glow of sunshine from the gas of a theatre. Can such things be, and overcome us like a summer glow, without our special wonder? To *nil admirari* people I leave it to say yea to that. If it could but be bottled, that sunshine,—even though it smelt of gas.

* * * * *

April 7, 1854.

Staying when in town with friends who thrice within these last few years have changed their abode, without on either occasion getting beyond the region of Regent's Park West and the Abbey Road, I have been taken by them more than once of late to a neighbouring theatre I never thought to have visited—the Marylebone. It has the advantage of a spacious stage, the disadvantage of surroundings, if not squalid, the reverse of refined. Yet if Sadler's Wells has been rescued from the revels of nut-crackers and orange-

peelers and shirt-sleevers among its gods, and promoted to the rank of a classical temple of the drama—thanks to the energy and ability and perseverance of Mr. Phelps,—why should not the Marylebone, in the west end instead of the far outlying north, be equally privileged under the direction of Mr. William Wallack? Locality ought to be in his favour; but I fear he is wanting in the means, the resources, the stamina, the staying power of the Sadler's Wells reformer. Where Mrs. Warner failed, with the attractions of a superior company, and with the intermittent light of such occasional stars as Macready himself, the chances seem to be depressingly against Mr. Wallack. He, too, may count as a star; but star-gazers in the purlieus of Portman Market are seemingly a feeble folk. No other play-house is so near at hand for the wealthier and cultured denizens of the Regent's Park and Bayswater, of St. John's Wood and Maida Hill, if they could be got to care to go there. But that is just what they can't.

It is only some half-dozen years since Mrs. Warner's directorate, and already what ought to have been memorable seems to be clean forgotten, as a dead thing out of mind. About the autumn of 1847 commenced her management of the Marylebone; and she signalized it, as Macready had signalized his opening night at Covent Garden ten years previously, by a revival of "*The Winter's Tale*." She had been his Paulina; she was now, of course, her own Hermione. Then came at short intervals "*The Hunchback*," young George Vining playing Clifford to her Julia; and "*The School for Scandal*," with her Lady Teazle to his Charles Surface; and "*Hamlet*," with Graham as the Prince to her Queen, J. Johnstone as Claudius, and for Ophelia, her niece, Miss Huddart—the name and style by which she had herself been best and longest known. Anon there followed "*The Jealous Wife*," when her Mrs. Oakley was equalled in merit by the Major of that sterling comedian G. Cooke; and a revival of "*The Maid's Tragedy*," which gave special scope for her emotional force. As Lady Townly in "*The Provoked Husband*," and as Beaumont and Fletcher's Scornful Lady, she added materially to her roll of achievements. G. Vining, Graham, Belton, G. Cooke, J. Johnstone, and clever Miss Saunders also took part and parts in the last named comedy—the lady's curate, Sir Roger, being played with gusto by that Mr. H. Webb whom I have referred to as at Edinburgh in 1852, and who ought to have been better accounted of and recognised in London, considering how well he justified Mrs. Warner's choice of him as her first low comedian by playing so well as he did, in the various pieces I have enumerated, the divers and diverse characters of Autolycus, and Fathom, and Crabtree, and the Gravedigger, and John Moody. Little Miss Parker, too, turned up with him at this time, and is now, I understand, his wife. With what spirit Mrs. Warner carried on the management and confronted difficulties may be inferred from her production in rapid succession, in 1848, of standard plays by Massinger and Sheridan Knowles—now a revival of "*Damon and Pythias*," and now of "*The Double Marriage*" (Beaumont and Fletcher again), in which Fanny Vining

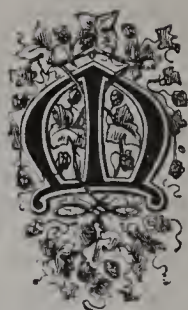
had a leading part, rather beyond her power at that period. Then came Macready—only to think of Macready at Marylebone!—and then the inevitable end. A new management, nevertheless, aspired to keep up the prestige of reform and refinement; Shakespeare was still to the front, and such names as Irish Hudson and E. H. Davenport and Mrs. Mowatt figured on the bills. But the tide was ebbing gradually, and it was low water mark when Mr. W. Wallack entered courageously on his present enterprise. Before his own first appearance in his own theatre some old comedies were revived which the chances are very rare indeed of ever seeing now-a-days, particularly so with such creditable rehearsing and ensemble as marked the revival here of “Speed the Plough”—to which is traceable the familiar “What Will Mrs. Grundy Say?” G. Cooke was here in his element, and so, more or less, were the other players enlisted by the new lessee—among them being Henry Vandenhoff, E. F. Edgar, T. Robertson, W. Shalders (like C. Fenton at Sadler’s Wells, scene-painter and low comedian both in one), Mrs. Robertson, Miss Cleveland,* and Miss Harriet Gordon (a favourite here for her pronounced aptitude in arch abigails and dashing demoiselles). To-night I have seen the Wallacks in “Macbeth.” He is a tragedian of considerable impulsive power, and gives proof of studious training. The lady’s physique qualifies her for the old-style ideal of Lady Macbeth, with a masculine tendency. Hence, too, her selection of such male parts as Ion—her impersonation of which is not likely to efface in old playgoers the remembrance of Ellen Tree; and again, as Romeo, to the Juliet of Miss Cleveland,* and the very spirited and successful Mercutio of the manager. In “The Winter’s Tale” and “The Lady of Lyons,” both husband and wife command the plaudits and sympathy of attentive but far from crowded houses. Prospects are none too promising in a pecuniary sense, and for the best of managements the end is near when both ends cannot be made to meet.

*The Miss Cleveland mentioned in the foregoing list of names I take to be that excellent actress, Mrs. Arthur Stirling, now far too seldom to be seen or heard of; and the Robertsons to be the parents of that numerous family, amounting to a score and upwards, of whom one son was the author of “Caste” and “School,” and his sister Madge is the still more widely-known Mrs. Kendal.—TR.



Play-bills—Old and New.

BY S. J. ADAIR FITZ-GERALD.



ANY conflicting statements have appeared during the last few years as to the period when play-bills were actually introduced, and by play-bills I do not mean programmes, which are purely a modern institution, but bills printed and distributed to announce the production and performance of plays. One authority, to which we naturally turn for correct information, says that the first play-bill printed was dated April 8, 1663, and was issued from Drury Lane. This is quite wrong, as I shall presently show. This particular bill, however, is worth quoting. It runs:—"By his Majestie his Company of Comedians at the New Theatre in Drury Lane, will be acted a comedy called the *Humovrous Lieutenant* by Beaumont and Fletcher." The characters are then detailed, and the bill concludes thus: "The play will begin at three o'clock exactly."

Now so far back as 1563 mention is made of printed play-bills, and doubtless they were used even anterior to this, but they only contained the title of the piece with the date and hour of performance, with occasionally the name of the author, but not until a much later date the full cast. There is no reason why Shakespeare's plays in his later days should not have been so announced. Just fancy reading a bill advertising a play as "writ by one Master Shakespeare!" Joseph Ames, the antiquarian, records in his "History of Printing," that James Roberts who published several of Shakespeare's works, printed bills for the players. In the Stationers Company's books there is an entry of a licence granted to one John Charlewoode in October, 1587, "by the whole consent of the Assistants for the onely ymprinting of all maner of billes for players; provided that if any trouble arise herebye, then Charlewoode to bear the charges." A very half-hearted sort of a license truly, but it is presumed that Charlewoode had good and sufficient reasons for applying for it.

These bills were very rude specimens of the black letter art, and were not handed round to the audience by any neatly arrayed damsel, who in witching guise proves a very harpy in these days by demanding sixpence and a shilling for a sheet of advertisements, but were pasted on the walls interior and exterior of the theatre, and also at the corner of the streets and on similar posts to those which Dr. Johnson was in the habit of touching as he wended his way down Fleet Street. The budding Willing of those times was probably one of the minor stage hands or "runners." By the way, what remark-

able prescience the Bard showed in saying "Doth give us bold advertisement!" This custom seems to have roused the particular ire of one puritanical scribbler of pamphlets, for he went to the trouble of writing a "Treatise against Idlenesse, Vaine playes and Interludes" and had it printed in heavy type, but carelessly omitted to put the date—probably previous to 1587, and the writer may have been Henry Chettle, whose anger had already been stirred by the fact that "Outroaring Dick and Wat Winbars" earned twenty shillings a day by singing Catches and Madrigals at Braintree fair in Essex. This precious document says "They (the players) used to set up their bills upon postes some certain days before, to admonish the people to make resort to their theatres that they may thereby be the better furnished, and the people prepared to fill their purses with their treasures." The oft-referred-to Water poet whose poetry is so seldom quoted, John Taylor to wit, alludes in one of his volumes to the practice of sticking bills on posts, and tells this anecdote—"Master Nat Field, the player, riding up Fleet Street at a great pace, a gentleman called him and asked him what play was plaied that day. He being angry to be staid on so frivolous a demand made answer that he might see what play was plaied on every poste. 'I cry you mercy,' said the gentleman, 'I took you for a poste, you rode so fast.'"

Curiously enough Pepys says nothing about play-bills—perhaps because they were common necessities, though he refers several times to only hearing of a forthcoming production through general or accidental conversation at some friend's house. The good folk who patronised the pit and gallery were not blessed with what Dogberry considered a mere concomitant of birth. That is to say even a moderate acquaintance with the three R's, and this drawback, coupled with the fact that itinerant players were not over-burdened with this world's goods, caused them to draw attention to their performances by beat of drum. Will Slye, who was factotum to Kempe during his provincial tour with his "Nine Men of Gotham," is represented with a drum. And Parolles, in "All's Well that Ends Well," speaking of this occupation, says, "Faith, sir, he has led the drum before the English comedians." The established houses, likewise, in London did not disdain this mode of attracting the public to a consideration of their fare. And we can well understand with what interest the catalogue of delights bawled forth by some underling of the theatres would be listened to by the idlers in St. Paul's Walk, where Grub-street hacks and ne'er-do-wells were wont to dine with his grace Duke Humphrey, and by the gazers into the book shops and stalls that abounded in the vicinity. We know what appallingly lengthy titles were affixed to the plays themselves, and can well believe the incidents as described by these followers of Autolycus to have been equally exciting and diffuse. A cynical scribbler of 1617 gives a fairly good description of one of these play-bill criers:

"Pr'ythee, what's the play?
The first I visited this twelve-month day.
They say, 'A new-invented boy of purl,
That jeopardd his neck to steale a girl

Of twelve ; and lying fast impounded for't,
 Has hither sent his bearde to aet his part,
 Against all those in open malice bent
 That would not freely to the theft consent :
 Faines all to's wish, and in the epilogue
 Goes out applauded for a famous—rogue.'
 Now hang me if I did not look at first
 For some such stuff by the fond people's thirst."

Play-bills do not seem to have been improved in any way until after the Restoration, when Charles the Second granted a license, through Court favour and influence, to Robert L'Estrange in August, 1663, he being surveyor of the imprimery and printing presses. The grant was worded that Robert L'Estrange was given "sole license and grant of printing and publishing all ballads, plays, etc., not previously printed, and play-bills, &c." These remunerative privileges he let out on lease or sold to different printers as it suited his pocket and pleasure. The Merry Monarch was passionately devoted to the play—it was during the discussion of Lord Ross's "Divorce Bill" that he gave utterance to the now common saying "As good as a play"—and it would be interesting to know whether he was provided with a written programme, or whether he and his favourites, being well acquainted with the actors, relied upon the personality of the performers for instruction as to the various characters in the piece.

Not till the dawn, however, of the eighteenth century were play-bills with the full cast of characters, synopsis of scenery, etc., extensively the mode in London. Theophilus Cibber, who wrote more biographies than plays, is stated to have been one of the most indefatigable reformers in this respect. Colley Cibber, too, made many improvements, and he it was who introduced two colours—alternate red and black of the title, descriptions of the acts, and so on. He also reduced the size of the bills. At one time the bills of Drury Lane were printed by a private press fixed in a room beneath the stage and published every afternoon, presumably for sale and distribution among the audiences. On the visits of Royalty special programmes or smaller bills were printed on white satin and placed in the Royal Box. This method, I believe, came to an end in the early part of this century.

The Brothers Smith, in "Rejected Addresses," remind us of the awkward and coarsely printed play-bills that were used for programmes when the present Drury Lane was about to be opened (1812). In a capital parody of Crabbe an entertaining incident is related :

"Some giggling daughter of the Queen of Love
 Drops, reft of pin, her play-bill from above ;
 Like Icarus, while laughing galleries clap,
 Soars, ducks, and dives in air the printed scrap ;
 But wiser, far than he, combustion fears,
 And, as it flies, eludes the chandeliers,
 Till sinking gradual with repeated twirl
 It settles, curling, on a fiddler's eurl ;
 Who from his powdered pate the intruder strikes
 And for mere malice, sticks it on the spikes."

Charles Lamb in one of his most agreeable essays, "On Some of the Old Actors," opens his sketch with "The casual sight of an old play-bill, which I picked up the other day—I know not by what chance it was preserved so long—tempts me to call to mind a few of the players, who make the principal figure in it." And similarly, reading of an anecdote of Mrs. Garrick the other day brought to my mind the singular circumstances that informed the world of the talent of the "Great Little Davy." The Lord Chamberlain, by pressure brought to bear by the citizens who had a horror of all things dramatic, deprived Gifford of his license almost immediately after he took possession of the theatre in Goodman's Fields, and in 1735 he fled to Portugal Street, but did not meet with encouraging success. So in 1741 he returned to Goodman's Fields and employed a peculiar subterfuge to defeat the mandate of the Lord Chamberlain. Not being allowed to act plays for money, he advertised a concert "at the late theatre," between the acts of which "A society of Ladies and Gentlemen would give dramatic performances gratuitously, for their own diversion." And strange to say no opposition was offered to his artful enterprise, and he flourished exceedingly. And anon came upon the scene a certain ambitious young gentleman who was dying to appear in public. It was on the 19th of October, 1741, that one of Gifford's entertainments was advertised to take place to commence at six o'clock with music and songs, the second part being devoted to the interpretation of Shakespeare's "Life and Death of King Richard the Third," with the ballad opera of "The Virgin Unmasked" to follow. The tickets were sold at 3s., 2s., and 1s., and purchasers were informed that the part of the Duke of Gloster would be played by "A gentleman who had never before appeared on any stage." That gentleman was David Garrick, the English Roscius. If only that bill were in existence, what a treasure it would be! So original was David's acting that he drew all the town from the west, and his fame and fortune were made doubly secure by his appearance at Drury Lane at the end of the season. His after successes are history. *En passant*, among the many improvements and innovations of Garrick must be added the introduction of footlights. Collecting play-bills is a fascinating pastime, and to attempt to give even the briefest account of notable first appearances would mean the undertaking of a task so stupendous that the most ardent lover of theatrical lore would shrink from it. But there is one remarkable play-bill that deserves recording, as it contains the names of those who marked an important era in the history of the stage. The bill in question is stated to have been discovered affixed to the wall of a shoemaker's shop in a small town in the country. It was issued by Mr. Kemble's Company of Comedians about 1766, and goes on to relate that "Mr. Kemble, with humble submission to the ladies and gentlemen of Wolverhampton and the town in general, proposes entertaining them on Wednesday evening at The Town Hall with a concert of vocal and instrumental music. Between the several parts of the concert (for the amusement of the time and

further improvement of polite literature) will be continued through the Historic Academy, with specimens of the various modes of elocution by the Inhabitants of the Town, for their diversion without fee, gain, hire, or reward." Now comes the important feature of this effusion: "Love in a Village" concluded the entertainment with the following cast: Sir William Meadows by Mr. K-mb-le; Young Meadows by Mr. S-dd-ns; Rosetta by Miss K-mb-le; Madge by Mrs. K-mb-le; Housemaid by Miss F. K-mb-le. Why such a palpably thin disguise was resorted to goodness only knows. Miss K-mb-le was the lady who married the Young Meadows, and became in after years the greatest tragedy actress of her time, as Mrs. Siddons. Some believe that she has never been surpassed yet.

Lying before me, as I write, is another surprisingly interesting play-bill of the old Queen's Theatre. It is dated February 6th, 1868. A revival of H. J. Byron's "Dearer than Life" is the chief feature. The cast is unique because the principal actors have all since become "stars": Michael Garner, Mr. J. L. Toole; Uncle Ben, Mr. Lionel Brough; Charley, Mr. C. Wyndham; Bob Gassitt, Mr. Henry Irving; Mr. Kedgely, Mr. John Clayton; and Old Bolter, with the good old song "The Grasp of an Honest Man," Mr. C. Seyton. The Lucy was Miss Henrietta Hodson, who is now Mrs. H. Labouchere; Mr. Labouchere at the time, by-the-way, was the real lessee of the theatre, though it was licensed to Mr. W. H. Liston. Miss H. Everard and Miss Ewell also played. Besides "Dearer than Life," the bill consisted of "A Race for a Dinner," with Mrs. John Clayton as Sponge, and Mr. H. Mellon as Doric. Then there was "The Little Rebel," with Mr. W. H. Stephens, Miss Henrietta Hodson, and Miss Kate Santley, and the whole concluded with William Brough's "Gnome King," with Messrs. Toole, Brough, W. H. Stephens, Keet Webb; Mesdames Kate Santley, Jane Rignold, Kate Egerton, and Everard. Several others unknown to fame also took part in the performance.

Of this truly monster entertainment Mr. Irving was the stage manager! The bill, as sold in the pit for two-pence, is a folded crown sheet printed in blue ink. Programmes, as we have them now, were not in use generally except in the stalls and boxes. Indeed, the modern programme is very modern indeed, and is barely fifty years old, and up till within less than twenty years the frequenters of the cheaper parts of the house had to be content with the vile, badly printed semi-posters, the ink of which used to come off on the hands and smelt abominably. It may be stated that when a tragedy was announced the bill was printed in red, and when a comedy or other piece, black ink was used.

Now programmes are going to the other extreme in size and get up. Some theatres issue very artistic cards and octavo and quarto sheets—others don't; but they all seem to have one object in view, viz., how to give the greatest trouble to the luckless wight who foolishly desires to find out the name of the play, whom it is by, and who the actors are. It is a maze worse than Hampton Court, for you have no guide at all. On the first page you are most likely informed where

you can purchase coffins on the hire system, tooth powder, basinettes, and brandy ; on the second, third, and fourth you are confronted with a perfect encyclopædia of toilette requisites, and are initiated into so many mysteries of feminine attire as makes you, being merely a modest male, positively blush and feel embarrassed. The cast of the play is supposed to be on it somewhere, but very few are equal to the task of discovering the exact spot. And for all these irritating advertisements, out of which the managements reap enormous profits, the unfortunate playgoer has to pay at least sixpence. If they were free one would not complain, but to be heavily mulcted for a sheet of advertisements is really too bad. At the better theatres the programmes are given away, but it ought to be the rule at all theatres. One might just as well be charged for the honour of reading a menu prior to ordering a dinner, as be expected to pay for a programme. Another grievance—why cannot acting managers date the programmes? and why cannot each theatre choose one particular size and style and keep to it? At present, the majority of them seem to chop and change about whenever a fresh piece is put on. The collector of programmes has, indeed, a hard time of it. He cannot have his programmes bound because each new play brings forth a different sized programme, and sometimes so arranged that it is simply impossible to have it bound up with anything. The vagaries of theatrical managers in these small matters are truly incomprehensible. They tell us that a theatre is a shop, and yet rarely bring any practical business tactics to bear upon the managing of it—especially in the minor details. What a pity a regular system is not arranged and enforced by those who are absolutely at the head of our theatres. Let all fees be abolished and all programmes offered without charge, and then if we could get a few original plays by British authors, well—then the dramatic millennium would be at hand!



Our Play=Box.

"ESTHER SANDRAZ."

Play in Three Acts, by SYDNEY GRUNDY, founded on ADOLPHE BELOT'S "*Femme de Glace*."

Placed in evening bill at the St. James's Theatre, May 3, 1890.

Henri Vandelle ..	Mr. CHARLES SUDEN.	Ma l'ame Fourcade ..	Mrs. CHARLES CALVERT.
Olivier Deschamps ..	Mr. ARTHUR BOURCHIER.	Henriette	Miss MARION LEA.
Fourcade	Mr. EVERILL.	Clarisse	Miss CARRIE BENTON.
Boisgommeux	Mr. H. DE LANGE.	Berthe	Miss LENA MEYERS.
Justin	Mr. ERSKINE LEWIS.	Blanche	Miss ETTIE WILLIAMS.
Joseph	Mr. MUNRO.	Esther Sandraz ..	Mrs. LANGTRY.
Jules	Mr. LAMBARTE.		

As Mr. Grundy's play was first produced at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, June 11, 1889, with Miss Amy Roselle in the title-*rôle*, and as a very full description of the plot was given in the July number of THE THEATRE of that year, there is no occasion to refer further to it, than to state that the interest turns on the endeavours of the heroine to blight the married life of Henri Vandelle, in revenge for his having forsaken her after promising her marriage. He, all the while vowing affection for her, tells her he must marry for money, and offers to share the wealth he will acquire with her; she scornfully tears off the jewels he has given her and casts them at his feet in the presence of the guests assembled at his last bachelor supper party. Esther Sandraz then contrives to become companion to his wife Henriette, and discovering that Olivier Deschamps, Vandelle's bosom friend, has been engaged to Henriette, does her utmost to bring about an intrigue between them, but they are both pure minded, and so she fails. Henriette has spoken hardly of Esther, and has thus made of her even a more bitter enemy; but in an interview, in which Henriette acknowledges the unkindness of her strictures, she softens the heart of the revengeful woman, already touched by the noble conduct and entreaties of Olivier. Esther promises to forego her vengeance, and to leave the house, and is on the point of doing so under the escort of Olivier, when Vandelle, imagining that it is his wife who is eloping with her former lover, fires on and kills her, and then, horrified at the mistake he has made, destroys himself. In the impersonation of such a character as Esther Sandraz, there is scope for the display of almost every phase of passion—the affection of a woman who has loved not wisely but too well; of the attributes of a softer nature turned to stone; of a heart and soul that are dead to every feeling but that of revenge, and, lastly, the re-awakening to a better spirit by words of kindness to which the woman has been unused. Mrs. Langtry, in her first scene, where she shows her passionate love for the selfish creature who has enthralled her, was womanly and tender, and, as she discovers his baseness, was grand and powerful in her contempt for him. When under his roof-tree, and defying him through the power that the compromising letters he has written her since his marriage have given her, to rid himself of her, there was much to be admired in the acting, but it wanted the venomous bitterness that the words expressed, and, though there was great art in Mrs. Langtry's later

scenes, there was a false ring ; the utterances of her repentance did not carry the conviction of sincerity. Yet it must be admitted that, taken altogether, the performance was greatly to be commended, for the rôle is an arduous one. Mr. Charles Sugden failed lamentably in expressing any ardour in his passion for the woman he had wronged, but was succesful in depicting an utterly callous man. Mr. Arthur Bouchier was most earnest and impressive, realising almost entirely a noble-spirited, unselfish gentleman, whose only thought was the welfare of the woman he loved. Miss Marion Lea, who has to represent a thoroughly innocent and pure-minded woman, ignorant of the evil of the world, touched the right cord throughout, and fairly divided the honours of the evening. Mr. Everill gave us an excellent bit of comedy as Fourcanade, a provincial mayor, who, on the pretence of public business, pays visits to Paris and indulges in the pleasures of the capital ; and Mrs. Charles Calvert was genuinely humorous as a trusting wife, till in an unlucky moment for him she discovers his peccadilloes. Mr. H. De Lange was particularly good as the fire-eating, jealous Boisgommeux.

"Esther Sandraz," which was accorded a most favorable reception, was preceded by "The Tiger," a musical farce, adapted by F. C. Burnand from "Taming a Tiger," and set to music by Edward Solomon. Even though the gods were put out of temper by the delay in raising the curtain, I do not think that had they been in the best of humours they would have returned a different verdict—one of unqualified disapproval—for the libretto was poor in fun, and the music not what we generally have from the composer. Mr. Charles Colnaghi, a well-known amateur, who made his professional *debût* as Philip Fuller, did his best to save the fortunes of the piece.

"SHE STOOPS TO CONQUER."

GOLDSMITH'S comedy divided into three acts.

Revived at the Criterion Theatre, Saturday evening, May 10, 1890.

Young Marlow	Mr. CHAS. WYNDHAM.	Tom Tickle	Mr. C. EDMONDS.
Hardcastle	Mr. WM. BLAKELEY.	Tom Twist	Mr. F. EMERY.
Hastings	Mr. W. DRAYCOTT.	Jack Slang	Mr. W. GUISE.
Sir Charles Marlow ..	Mr. F. ATHERLEY.	Mat Muggins	Mr. H. ESMOND.
Tony Lumpkin	Mr. GEO. GIDDENS.	Mrs. Hardcastle ..	Miss M. A. VICTOR.
Diggory	Mr. S. VALENTINE.	Miss Neville	{ Miss ELEANORE
Roger	Mr. S. HEWSON.		LEYSHON.
Ralph	Mr. C. STEYNE.	Maid	Miss E. PENROSE.
Gregory	Mr. L. CHAPUY.	Barmaid	Miss R. MCNEILL.
Stingo	Mr. J. FRANCIS.	Miss Hardcastle ..	Miss MARY MOORE.

Mr. Wyndham knows his audiences so well that the fact will in a measure account for his fresh departure in the general acting of Goldsmith's time-honoured comedy. The patrons of the Criterion prefer to laugh ; they as a rule like everything taken in a lively rattling manner, and so young Marlow's bashfulness is made almost farcical in its hesitation and ultra shyness. Hardcastle, as represented by Mr. Blakeley, instead of being a sententious, well-informed and rather stately character, is a fatuous old gentleman, who being made the butt of his young visitor, becomes a laughing-stock, and the Tony Lumpkin of Mr. Giddens is a mischievous rattle-pated youth, not by any means obtuse, but rather cunning than otherwise, and notwithstanding his association with pot-house companions, retaining the manners of a gentleman. The Mrs. Hardcastle of Miss Victor is most in accordance with tradition—she is still a vain silly lady, wrapped up in her cubbish offspring and blind to his faults. The Miss Hardcastle of Miss Mary Moore was lady-like, but a little wanting in the coquetry and dash of the character.

Mr. W. Draycott was fairly good as Hastings, and Miss Eleanore Leyshon attractive as Miss Neville. The Diggory of Mr. S. Valentine was good. A number of "gags" are introduced which are quite unnecessary, and the play is now reduced to three acts, with tableau curtains to allow for the changes of scene, which are effected with marvellous rapidity. Old playgoers will scarcely approve of the new reading, but to the modern school it may prove acceptable. The mounting of the piece is very handsome. "She Stoops to Conquer" is preceded by A. C. Troughton's one act comedietta, "Living Too Fast," which is only noticeable for the efficient manner in which the character of Julia is represented by Miss F. Frances.

"THE CABINET MINISTER."

Original farce, in Four Acts, by A. W. PINERO.

First produced at the Court Theatre, Wednesday, April 23, 1890.

Earl of Drumdurris ..	Mr. RICHARD SAUNDERS.	Dowager Countess of Drumdurris	Miss R. G. LE THIÈRE.
Viscount Aberbrothock		Lady Euphemia Vibart	Miss ISABEL ELLISSON.
Rt. Hon. Sir Julian Twombley, G.C. MG.	Mr. ARTHUR CECIL.	Countess of Drumdurris	Miss EVA MOORE.
Brooke Twombley ..	Mr. E. ALLAN AYNES-WORTH.	Lady Twombley ..	Mrs. JOHN WOOD.
Macphail of Ballochcevin	Mr. BRANDON THOMAS.	Imogen	Miss FLORENCE TANNER.
Mr. Joseph Lebanon..	Mr. WEEDON GROSSMITH.	Lady Macphail ..	Mrs. EDMUND PHELPS.
Valentine White ..	Mr. HERBERT WARING.	Hon. Mrs. Gaylustre..	Miss ROSINA FILIPPI.
Mr. Mitford	Mr. FRANK FARREN.	Angèle	Miss MARIANNE CALDWELL.
The Munkittrick ..	Mr. JOHN CLULOW.	Miss Munkittrick ..	Miss FLORENCE HARRINGTON.
Probyn	Mr. ERNEST PATON.		

Even the brilliancy of Mr. Pinero's dialogue—and he has not yet written any so brilliant in its pungent satire and quick repartee—could prevent some expressions of disapprobation when the curtain fell on "The Cabinet Minister." The fact was that the audience was puzzled. Had they sat out a farce, which was merely to ridicule the follies of modern society? or was it a comedy in which they were to feel interested as representing the troubles and anxieties that even those in the higher walks of life must suffer? Some of the episodes were so thoroughly farcical, whilst on the other hand the distresses of the unhappy Lady Twombley were so real as almost to make one weep. Then there were so many characters that were mere sketches, clever indeed, but that seemed to require elaborating before one could feel that they were realities. The plot is of the slightest, and should certainly not have been spread over more than three acts. Sir Julian Twombley is "The Cabinet Minister," but a disappointed one. He is anything but wealthy, is harassed for money, and finds a comfort and soothing of his troubles by playing on the flute at all sorts of odd times. His lot is none the happier in that his wife, to keep up appearances and to launch her son and daughter well in life by prosperous marriages, has become deeply involved in debt and is in the power of the Hon. Mrs. Gaylustre (really a fashionable milliner), and her unmitigated little snob of a brother, Joseph Lebanon. These two force themselves into society under the ægis of Lady Twombley's introduction, compel her to obtain them an invitation to one of her great relative's houses in Scotland, where they are guilty of all sorts of offences against good breeding. Eventually Lebanon, by threats, induces his victim to purloin an official letter relating to a canal that is to be constructed in India, that he may use his information to speculate on the Stock Exchange. Fortunately, Sir Julian Twombley has had some suspicions; he has manufactured a letter the contents of which are in direct opposition to the intentions

of the Government. He tells his wife this, when she in an agony of mind confesses what she has done. She immediately takes advantage of her knowledge of the truth, telegraphs to her stockbroker to buy shares, and thus makes such a fortune as clears off all their liabilities and enables their domestic barque to anchor in calm water, and the play winds up with a wild dancing of the "Strathspey." People are used to go to the Court and to laugh at Mrs. John Wood's eccentric humour; in this piece they not only have many opportunities for doing so, but of seeing her in another light, that of a woman driven almost distracted by her cares and worries, and are no doubt surprised that this clever actress can so powerfully delineate an almost new line of character. Mr. Arthur Cecil is truly excellent as the well meaning, not too brilliant state official; and Mr. Brandon Thomas made his mark as a Highland laird, of huge stature, vast wealth, and of few words and completely under the control of his mother, Lady Macphail (a talkative dame well played by Mrs. Edmund Phelps). Miss Rosina Filippi gave a clever rendering of the sly pushing Hon. Mrs. Gaylustre. Mr. E. Allan Aynesworth was fresh and original as a young man of the present day; and Miss Florence Tanner as a reigning belle, Mr. Herbert Waring as an unpolished Colonial and Miss Le Thiére as one of the leaders of society were all good; in fact, the cast generally acquitted themselves well. To Mr. Weedon Gro-smith, however, must be awarded the palm for his novelty of treatment of the usurer Lebanon. It was a thoroughly natural performance without any apparent straining for effect, and yet the effect came in his every word and action, and though many could but say that they had met such a one in real life, no such picture has yet been seen on the stage. Before leaving the subject, I must refer to the beauty of the dresses worn by the ladies; they are in the most perfect taste and of the very handsomest description, and will no doubt soon attract many of the fair sex to visit the theatre. The principals were well applauded, and the author had to bow his acknowledgments, but "The Cabinet Minister" will not be rated as one of Mr. Pinero's successes. It should be stated, however, that the public is flocking to the Court Theatre, the house being nightly filled to overflowing.

"THEODORA."

Play in six acts, adapted by Mr. ROBERT BUCHANAN, from "Sardou's masterpiece."

First produced in London, at the Princess's Theatre, Monday, May 5, 1890.

Justinian	Mr. W. H. VERNON.	Calebas	Mr. THOMAS BLACKLOCK
Marcellus	Mr. CHAS. CARTWRIGHT.	First Lord	Mr. WM. PRICE.
Belisarius	{ Mr. CECIL MORTON	Second Lord	Mr. C. DOWNEY.
	YORK.	Third Lord	Mr. THOS. HARRIS.
Euphratas	Mr. GEO. BERNAGE.	Fourth Lord	Mr. ARTHUR PRIOR.
Caribert	Mr. GEO. W. COCKBURN.	Chief of the Ostiaries	Mr. GEO. AUBREY.
Michael	Miss MABEL CHAMPION.	Antheas	Mr. LEONARD BOYNE.
Timoeles	Mr. ALFRED B. CROSS.	Antonini	Miss CLARICE TREVOR.
Agathon	Mr. HOWARD STURGE.	Tamyris	{ Miss DOLORES DRUM-
Faber	Mr. HENRY DE SALLA.		MOND.
Syrax	Mr. CHARLES LANDER.	Callirhoe	Miss MARIE STEWART.
The Executioner ..	Mr. CHAS. FORSEY.	Macedonia	Miss ALICE DE WYNTON.
Mundus	Mr. HENRY LUDLOW.	Iphis	Miss A. LLOYD.
Priseus	Mr. W. H. GUNN.	Alexis	Miss DORA DE WYNTON.
Lyeostrates	{ Mr. WALTER LAW-	Columba	Miss BARBARA MEADE.
	RENCE.	Zena	Miss LUCY O'CONNOR.
Orthes	Mr. CHAS. ANSON.	Theodora	{ Miss GRACE HAW-
Amrou	{ Mr. GEORGE LAKE		THORNE.
	GRANGE.		

Officers, Lords-in-Waiting, Ostiaries, Scholars of the Emperor's Body Guard, Goths, Slaves, Servants, Eunuchs, Nubian Dancing Girls, Fan Bearers, Maids of Honour, Ladies-in-Waiting, and Incense Bearers.

"Theodora" is a play that was written specially for Madame Bernhardt; it is one in which she is great, because she is a great

actress, but it is not a good play, though a showy one. For the critical to enjoy it, the heroine must be impersonated by an artist of the first rank, for she has to show us how a girl who began life in the circus could so bewitch an emperor as to become his consort, and who after she wore the diadem could still delight in mingling with her former companions; who whilst being the ruling power of the state, could risk all in her wild mad passion for a young Greek; a woman who can wind her husband round her finger, who is as iron to her enemies but as wax to her lover, to save whom she will in cold blood pierce to the heart with a bodkin taken from her hair, an unfortunate creature, who might under the agony of the torture betray his fellow conspirator. Miss Grace Hawthorne has already filled the part with considerable success in the provinces, and though she could not altogether look the character or rise to the heights of grandeur that it requires, succeeded in rendering it a capable performance, and one far greater than was anticipated. Mr. Leonard Boyne was at his best when confessing how unwittingly he had betrayed his fellow conspirators. Mr. Cartwright's rendering of Marcellus left nothing to be desired; his great scene when beseeching Theodora to put an end to him was most effective. Mr. W. H. Vernon was to the letter the crafty, superstitious, and craven emperor. Mr. George W. Cockburn, Miss Marie Stuart, and Miss Dolores Drummond, were good. The piece is splendidly staged, the dresses are of the costliest description, and the mounting altogether lavish, so that as a spectacle alone "Theodora" is likely to attract large audiences for some time to come. Mr. Buchanan's version is a good one, but though his allowing the empress to poison herself, and so die with Andreas, affords a tableau and a scene for the heroine, I doubt whether it is as effective as the curtain falling on the supposition that she will suffer from the silken bowstring, as in the original.

"A MODERN MARRIAGE."

New Play in Four Acts by NEVILLE DOONE.

First produced at the Comedy Theatre Thursday afternoon, May 8, 1890.

Sir Richard Arlingford, Bart. (<i>Secretary for Foreign Affairs</i>)	} Mr. JOHN BEAUCHAMP	Captain Gossett	Mr. HERBERT BASING.
John Middleton		Wilson	Mr. H. EDEN.
Walter Trevor	Mr. JULIAN CROSS.	Lady Blessington ..	Miss ROBERTHA ERSKINE.
Henry Edwards	Mr. ROYCE CARLETON.	Eva Arlingford	Miss ELLALINE TERRISS.
Major Sportington ..	Mr. LEWIS WALLER.	Lilian Arlingford ..	Miss ALMA MURRAY.
	Mr. C. KENT.		

"A Modern Marriage" turned out to be but a very crude play, with a totally unnecessary fourth act, and written at times in a very slipshod manner, and with such expressions as the "*garb* of charity reaching to heaven." The full cast is given on account of the excellence of the acting, which really carried the piece. To tell the story in as few words as possible, Walter Trevor is an adventurer who has by some means obtained the post of secretary to Sir Richard Arlingford; he is also a Russian spy. He steals important despatches; abstracts the one particular document, and puts the remainder in the pocket of Henry Edwards' coat, and to cast suspicion on him, leaves an envelope addressed to the latter in the bureau from which the papers have been abstracted. Edwards is an artist with whom Lilian is in love; he has just been accepted, but, of course, being charged with his crime, he leaves England and is supposed to die in Russia. Lilian, at the instance of her father, marries Walter Trevor,

now Lord Dacre. Edwards suddenly reappears and taxes Trevor not only with having stolen the despatches, but also with having by false evidence assumed his (Edwards') title and estates. Trevor braves it out, feeling sure that nothing will be done to him on account of his wife. His career is ended by his accomplice, John Middleton, whose daughter he has betrayed, but in his dying moments he utters words that induce Lilian to believe that Edward has shot him. The fourth act is used to clear up this mistake, and is only redeemed by an excellent love scene, most unconventionally and naturally played by Mr. C. Kent and Miss Ellaline Terriss. Lady Blessington was a ridiculous character who sets a canine pet above the whole human species, but was made almost possible by Miss Robertha Erskine. Generally speaking, the acting of the remainder of the principals was worthy of the greatest praise.

"PAUL KAUVAR."

Drama in four acts, written by STEELE MACKAYE.

Produced for the first time in England at Drury Lane Theatre, Monday, May 12, 1890.

Paul Kauvar	Mr. WILLIAM TERRISS.	First Orderly	Mr. HERBERT LEWIN.
Honore Albert Maxime ..	Mr. HENRY NEVILLE.	General Kleterre	Mr. ACTON BOND.
General Delaroche ..	Mr. ARTHUR STIRLING.	Second Orderly	Mr. J. L. STONER.
Marquis de Vaux ..	Mr. CHARLES HUDSON.	Diane de Beaumont ..	Miss MILLWARD.
Dodolphe Potin	Mr. VICTOR STEVENS.	Nanette Potin	Miss EDITH BRUCE.
Carrac	Mr. ERNEST HENDRIE.	Scarlotte	Mrs. CLIFTON.
Colonel La Hogue ..	Mr. WALLACE MOIR.		

"By arrangement with Mr. Terriss," as announced in the play-bills, "Paul Kauvar," which has been running for some four years in America, is now put on its merits before a London audience. The play will probably prove a success here, for though the dialogue is stilted and its main interest turns on the same situations as render powerful "The Dead Heart" and "All for Her," yet that interest is well sustained to the close of the third act, and what is lacking in the fourth is compensated for by a great scene for the hero and a stirring episode in the attack of the Republicans on a chateau. Paul Kauvar is President of the "Revolutionary Section of Fraternity," and so is able to conceal without suspicion under his roof the Duc de Beaumont and his daughter Diane. Association with her leads to love, and she and Paul are secretly married. Another suitor of hers, the Marquis de Vaux, induces the Duke to believe that he is about to be betrayed by Kauvar, and so the Royalist and Diane are on the point of quitting their safe shelter, when the Duke is arrested, as he believes, by the orders of Kauvar. This arrest has, however, been brought about by the Marquis, who has obtained the warrant from Kauvar as though it were to imprison some other enemy to the public safety (for the event takes place in 1794, during the Revolution in France). Diane casts in her lot with her father, leaving her husband; and after trial the Duke is condemned to the guillotine. Kauvar, to save him, assumes his cloak, and after confessing to the Marquis, who poses as his most faithful friend, his marriage with Diane, and confiding her to his care, goes forth to die in place of the Duke. Kauvar is saved, however, in his turn, by the good Abbé St. Cye, who assumes his dress and is beheaded in his stead. The Duke and Diane escape to La Vendée, and are protected by General Delaroche, the Royalist Commander. As Kauvar is supposed to be dead, the Marquis proposes for the hand of Diane, and is accepted by her

father, but she has learnt of her husband's escape, and of his being now a captain in the revolutionary troops. She therefore confesses her marriage to her father, who, outraged at her plebeian union and at her proving such a traitor to her order, drives her from him with scorn and opprobrium. Diane throws back scorn for scorn in this really fine scene, and rushes off to find her husband and live or die with him. In a *melée* between the opposing troops Kauvar is taken prisoner. General Delaroche admires him for his bravery and honest outspoken faith in his principles, and at length foregoes the sentence of death to which Kauvar is liable, on his giving his *parole* not to again bear arms against his King. The chateau in which this takes place is carried by assault by the "sans culottes"—the General, the Duke, and Diane are likely to fall victims to the fury of the mob, when General Kleterre arrives, announces the death of Robespierre, and that "The Reign of Terror" is at an end—but not before the Marquis's treachery has been exposed and he has been given over to the tender mercies of the enraged and howling "patriots" who look upon him as a spy. The Duke acknowledges how he has wronged Kauvar by his suspicions, and, as some amendment, accepts him as a son-in-law. In his love scenes, and his agony when he thinks he has lost his wife, in his nobility in going to the scaffold to prove how unfounded are the charges laid against him, Mr. Terriss was excellent; but it is a pity that his declamation in the stronger scenes should sometimes rise almost to shouting. Mr. Neville can always act the courtly nobleman who can accept misfortune with all the *insouciance* of the old *régime*, and in the act where he upbraids his daughter he was powerful. Miss Millward was very tender, showing the hesitating weakness of a woman swayed alternately by the affection for a parent and love for a husband until that husband's character is attacked, and then she was truly grand in his defence. The blot in the cast was the acting of Mr. Charles Hudson; he made of the Marquis altogether too mean and pitiful a scoundrel. He would have deceived no honest man, his villainous countenance (as made up by him) would have betrayed him, and his adoption of Mr. Henry Irving's voice and manner were decidedly objectionable. Miss Edith Bruce, as a strong-minded wife, and Mr. Victor Stevens as a henpecked, timorous husband supplied the comic element, which was weak, but which they did their best with. Mr. Ernest Hendrie and Mrs. Clifton represented the bloodthirsty, popular leaders of the bloodthirsty Republicans. The piece was excellently staged, and the verdict may be taken as a favourable one. The principals had repeatedly to bow their acknowledgments, as had Mr. Augustus Harris at the close of the performance. The drama was preceded by a farce called "The Married Rake," which pleased the gods, and in which Mr. Victor Stevens was very amusing as the amorous Mr. Flighty, who has to pay for his indiscretion by means of a practical joke played upon him by his wife and her friend.





Mr. JEROME K. JEROME.

"The world's mine oyster."

—"MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR," act ii, sc. 2.

Our Musical-Box.

Musical Silhouettes.

No. 2. *THE "INTENSE" COMPOSER.*



HIS type of composer is almost obsolete, it may be said, but he still crops up now and again. He is intensely popular with the ladies, intensely conceited, and intensely obtuse. Whether he writes songs or only sings them, he always doth both, or either, as the case may be, for Art, with a capital A.

At the same time, he has a soul not above pounds, shillings, and pence, and his songs or his voice command a price immeasurably above their fair market value.

His songs are, as a rule, the deepest of the deep. If the words be not vague in the extreme, the music will make them so. Now and again, a flash of melody is visible through the thunder-cloud of intensity that darkens the composition from the opening bar of the first symphony to the last note on the final page, generally a solitary key note, apparently wandering solus in the weird region of the bass. Sometimes a whole phrase may be of real and genuine interest ; but it is invariably marred by a sudden, inconsequent and affected change of tempo or key.

This school—for the “intense” composer is one of a large class—deprecates anything so unmusical as melody, except in its own songs and compositions. It is so blinded, as a rule, by the intense beauty of these that it cannot see merit in any others, though it can perceive all the faults and is not above pointing them out, languidly and uninterestedly, as who should say, “This is Art’s duty and we will do it, cost us what it may.”

As I have said, he is popular with the ladies. They admire his songs, sing them in a manner feebly imitative of the composer (when he happens to sing) and, as a true worshipper should, see nothing worth mentioning in the productions of any other musical genius, from Wagner down to—well, say Smith. They go to all the concerts at which their particular idol sings—which is exceedingly beneficial to Art—and the concert givers.

At the same time, the “intense” composer is often a clever and capable musician, who has drifted into being what he is through stress of circumstances, perhaps ; but he submerges all his ability in

affectation and pedantry until the average observer can see little or nothing of it.

After being what Byron calls "the comet of a season," and, perhaps, the star of two seasons, he finds a new lion roaring to the same listening crowd. He is forgotten. This is the crucial moment of his career. If he is worth anything, he will go on working, and sooner or later obtain his reward, though it may not be the adoring smiles of silly women, or the rapturous applause of still sillier audiences. He will gain the favour of that great section of the musical world, the public, which will wait for his songs, criticise them for what they are intrinsically worth, buy them, and sing them. He will gradually lose his "intensity," and become a reasonable and ordinary human being.

If the reverse—well, the reverse is hardly worth considering. Your lion may roar loudly and he will, but if folk will not hear him, turn their deafer ear, and even go away, smiling pity, what is he to do? Go on roaring?

True, he can pose as a martyr to Art, with its capital A. But a long continued standing in one strained pose is calculated to make the frame ache.

Yet to retire from the field and make way to a younger rival—there is heartache in that. Whichever he may elect to do, whether he serve Art, or woo social popularity, he will carry with him to his grave, wherever and whenever it may be, a sense of a disappointed and disappointing life.

SEMIBREVE.

There has been something like an epidemic of pianoforte recitals setting in. How long it will last cannot be said; the musical critic prays it may not be severe—a mere "boom" as the Americans put it.

Madame Frickenhaus' recital took place on the 19th of last month at Prince's Hall. The talented artist gave a finished rendering of Schumann's F Sharp Minor Sonata, and a very charming Nocturne in E Flat, from the pen of Mr. Edward Cutler, met with such marked approval as would have justified its repetition.

On the 21st April Mr. Frederic Lamond's recital at Prince's Hall. While execution and technique were all that could be wished, it struck me that Mr. Lamond's playing was cold; it lacked soul. I would rather hear a great work interpreted faultily, but with that intangible undefinable quality, than rendered perfectly without it. There was an appreciative audience.

Mr. St. Oswald Dyke's recital on the 23rd April, at Prince's Hall, drew a very good house. His execution was unequal, but on the whole his performance was promising, except in one way—he must leave off writing songs. Mrs. Helen Trust sang two from his pen, both feebly imitative of Greig, whose "Solvieg's lied" she sang with much expression. I admire Herr Hess as a violinist greatly, though he is a trifle "hard" at times.

At the Philharmonic, on the 24th April, Mr. Edward German's "Richard III" overture brought a clever English composer to the fore, and Herr Dvorak directed his new Symphony in G, a work that received immediate and tumultuous applause.

There is not a better conductor in London than Mr. George Riseley, and the Bristol Orpheus Glee Society owe much of their success to his untiring zeal and industry. A most admirable performance was theirs on the 26th of last month at St. James's Hall. Anything better could not have been desired or obtained: the light and shade were perfect. But the praise should go where it is due—to Mr. George Riseley, who took all the applause without a smile on his face, and with the same imperturbability to the demand for encores that he shows at the Colston Hall, Bristol, otherwise the concert would have lasted twice as long. Miss Lehmann sang two of those quaint old English ballads she and Mr. Chappell have unearthed, delightfully, and Mr. Harper Kearton, with his cultivated tenor voice assisted.

There are but few sweeter voices on the lyric stage than that of Mr. Hayden Coffin; and he sings with such perfect ease that it is a delight to listen to him. So no wonder that Prince's Hall was filled on the afternoon of the 30th April on the occasion of his morning concert. Space will not permit the enumeration of the artistes who "assisted," the popular baritone's most appreciated contribution being his artistic rendering of "My Lady's Bower," in response to an encore. In spite of the many now in the field, I hope to see Mr. Coffin's concert bloom into a hardy annual.

A most successful concert was given by Mr. Hans Wessely, the accomplished violinist, at Prince's Hall on the 1st April, assisted by Madame Haas, Mr. Theodor Frantzen and Miss Alice Schridowitz. The last named lady sang Ambroise Thomas' polonaise "Je suis Titania" admirably; and the well-arranged programme, including Brahms' Sonata in D Minor and Chopin's F Minor Fantasia met with much approval from the audience.

Mr. J. Munro Coward's Cantata, "The Fishers," was performed on the 2nd ult. by the St. George's Glee Union at Pimlico Hall, assisted by Miss Hilda Coward, Miss L. Jones, Mr. Edward Dalzell, and Mr. Fred Bevan. The composer presided at the Mustel organ, and was accorded much applause for the successful performance of a most graceful work.

At Mr. Lawrence Kellie's first "recital" on the 6th, Miss Ellen Terry recited, dramatically, Longfellow's "Killed at the Ford," and archly, "The Danish Boy's Whistle," and was received with something like enthusiasm. A new song, "Sleeping Tide," by the composer of "Douglas Gordon," sung by the composer, was well received, and Mr. Kellie sang it most expressively. It is likely to be a success. Miss Marguerite Hall sang charmingly, and added as an encore "La Charmante Marguerite," than which nothing could have been more appropriate. Miss M. Morgan, Mr. Barrington Foote, Signors Simonetti and Bisaccia, and Mr. W. Ganz also assisted. But Miss Hall's singing pleased me, and Mr. Oscar Wilde's verses (set by Mr. Kellie) amused me, perhaps, more than anything else.

On the 6th May, the Misses Marianne and Clara Eissler's morning concert proved most successful. Miss Marianne Eissler performed, with brilliant execution, Dr. Mackenzie's "Pibroch," composed for Sarasate. Miss Clara Eissler drew well-merited applause for her varied harp solos, and her duet with that past master of the harp, Mr. John Thomas. Mr. Durward Lely, Signor Foli, and Miss Emmy Eissler also rendered valuable assistance.

The second concert of the Bach Choir, on the afternoon of the 10th May, attracted a very large audience to St. James's Hall. The performance consisted of Brahms' "German Requiem" and Villiers Stanford's "Revenge." The soloists were Miss Fillunger and Mr. Ffrangcon Davies, the latter being exceedingly well received. He certainly has a very fine voice. Professor Stanford was recalled and cheered at the conclusion of his spirited work, which was worthily presented.

By way of contrast to the arrangement of "The Gondoliers," see that of "The Red Hussar," published by Metzler & Co. It is arranged by the composer

himself—and who could do it better? This in two senses. The music, though not the best Solomon has written, is taking and melodious, and loses none of its charm by being arranged for the piano. Again, see the arrangements of “Marjorie” reduced from Walter Slaughter’s score by Mr. Rowland Wood, of which the same, and even more may be said. It takes a musician, and a clever one, to do this sort of thing—more than an American school teacher whose efforts soar no higher than “Golden Wavelets” or “Brooklet Whispers.”

I will admit that the music of “The Red Hussar” grows upon one; I like it better now than I did at first. But ill-luck always seems to follow Mr. Solomon with regard to his theatres. I hope yet to see him make a brilliant success, for he certainly is melodious, and his orchestration is never common. I doubt, though, if American audiences will “take to” the “Red Hussar”; their discrimination, so far as music is concerned, is not very great. In saying good-bye to it, at the Lyric, I cannot refrain from mentioning Mr. Charles Ryley, who has an excellent baritone voice, Mr. Mudie, the best “Sir Middlesex” of any who played the part, and Mr. Arthur Williams, who is a great deal funnier than Arthur Roberts. I pitied Mr. Le Hay, in “The Sentry,” for a more wretched first piece I never saw.

“Thorgrim” is not, to my thinking, either so superlatively good or so abnormally bad as some of the critics would have it. No one can deny Mr. Cowen’s ability; but, though able enough, he has not succeeded in creating a work of any very great interest. The same applies equally to Mr. Bennett’s libretto, on the faults of which some critics have been very severe. Truly, one does not look for any poetic excellence in the “book” of an opera, (*teste* that of “Faust”) though literary skill is surely needful. But neither the plot nor the score seems to make one interested in what goes on. Who is to blame, who shall say? It is beyond my province. There is no lack of melody, certainly; and the orchestration is not wanting in colour, grace, and originality. “Thorgrim” will probably be successful, even more so than in London, in the provinces.

A brief summary of its labours now that the Carl Rosa season has ended, may not be amiss. Ten operas have been presented, *Thorgrim* (five performances), *Carmen*, *Faust*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Lurline*, *Maritana*, *Bohemian Girl*, *Lohengrin*, *Mignon*, and *The Star of the North*. Perhaps the most successful of these were *Carmen* and *Lohengrin*; the least acceptable, *Lurline*. We heard nothing of *The Jewess*, *The Pearl Fishers*, Balfe’s *Talisman*, nor of *The Rose of Castille*. It was wise, indeed, to reserve these, bearing in mind the conservatism evinced so plainly by the steady popularity accorded to old favourites by the public. *Carmen* is, indeed, a safe draw, probably because it is both dramatic and melodious, two qualities not always found operatically united. All in all, the season has been a fairly successful one, and the highest praise is due to everyone concerned, from Mr. Augustus Harris downwards.

CLIFTON BINGHAM.

NEW MUSIC RECEIVED.

From BOOSEY & Co.: “Home, Dearie, Home,” (F. E. Weatherly and J. L. Molloy). Although its grace and simplicity recommend it, there is not much merit in this song, nor originality either. It almost descends to the commonplace.—“Old Whitehall,” (W. Mills and Ernest Birch). Neither is this quite worthy of its composer, though the refrain is melodious enough to make one wish the words were not so poor. Mr. Birch has written and can write better songs.—“Mary Grey” (Clifton Bingham and Hope Temple). Why so sad verses, O author? Surely there is a plenty of sadness in the world. Yet, verily this is a charming song, for all its mournful tone, and the fair hand of its composer hath not yet lost its cunning.—“The Merry Monks” (E. Oxenford and Arthur E. Godfrey). A capital song, in which the Gregorian is introduced with really quaint effect. Unfortunately, the words of the third verse are pointless and so spoil the song.—“’Twas Surely Fate” (Clifton Bingham and Hope Temple). Graceful, but not in its composer’s happiest vein.—Words of a long familiar type and music of which little can be said, combine in making a somewhat commonplace song of “The Angel’s Promise” (F. E. Weatherly and A. H. Behrend).—The music of “To have Thee Near”

(J. Muir and Howard Talbot) is excellent of its kind, but the words are those of ten thousand more or less recently published ballads, grammatical errors and all.—Last, but immeasurably the best song, is a setting of Shakespeare's "Blow, Blow, thou Winter Wind," by J. Serjeant, to which we give the very highest praise when we say it is much too good ever to be very popular. But musicians will admire it, and singers with a soul above jingle will sing it.

From STANLEY LUCAS & CO. : "As the Dawn" (Ellis Walton and Otto Cantor). A clever song of the "artistic" school, with less of the straining after effect and more melody than usual ; good enough to be successful, and evidently the work of a musician.

From METZLER & CO. : "Crossing the Bar," a setting of Tennyson's poem, by Alfred Cellier. It was only to be expected that the simplicity and lyrical beauty of this little poem would suggest music to some composer at once. Mr. Cellier has done his task admirably, and the result is a very charming song.—"Weary of Earth" is a well written sacred song by Mr. J. M. Coward, effective and expressive. The hand of the true musician betrays itself in every phrase ; a song so full of deep feeling is rarely to be met with.—"Six Songs" (by B. C. Stephenson and Alfred Cellier). It would be interesting to know if Mr. Stephenson claims any poetic merit for his verses, because they descend to the level of bald prose in some instances. For example, five of his lyrics are in almost the same metre ; the false rhyming of "reality" and "immortality," "gone" and "one ;" the frequent iteration of that fatal "so." "Nature has gone to rest" is pure bathos ; so is "Folks ;" and "Tune Up, My Lute," is even worse—little better, in fact, than the lyrics of a modern comic opera. There is no trace of poetic feeling whatever, nor any particularly original idea in a single one of his "lyrics." Mr. Cellier's music is exceedingly graceful and melodious, in spite of this ; the accompaniments to numbers 2, 3 and 6 are Mr. Cellier at his happiest. But music and words are not in any of the songs so perfectly wedded as they might be. Why this is so is not for us to say. There is in them not that blending of

" perfect soul with perfect soul,
In one complete harmonious whole."

that makes such songs as these precious gems wherewith to deck the brow of that most exacting mistress, Art.—"The Red Hussar" Waltz, by Bucalossi, and "The Red Hussar" March, by Edward Solomon, are both arrangements of airs in the latter composer's opera, with attractive title pages. Mr. Bucalossi has also turned "Douglas Gordon" into a waltz, but admirably as he has done his task we do not care for it. The song makes a good waltz, but we are prejudiced against waltzes made out of popular songs, and what an awful title page !—We have also received "The Fishers," a Cantata by Henry Rose and J. Munro Coward, which shall be noticed at length next month.

From CHAPPELL & CO. : "Bird of the Greenwood" (Edwin D. Lloyds). An exceedingly pretty and musical setting of Mrs. Hemans' poem, neither too abstruse nor descending to the commonplace. We shall be pleased to see other songs from the same pen, if they are as good as this.



Our Amateurs' Play=Box.

The latter-day burglar, on the stage, has ascended from the level of the nuisance and the scare to take his place beside the stained-glass saint, halo and all. Once it was the king, now it is the thief, who "can do no wrong." Much as Buffalo Bill's coarse-grained cow-boys were fêted and petted by the blue-blooded belles of Belgravia is the drawing-room forger pampered by patricians. He is, in a word, the fashion. From the simpering, shy, shame-faced young lady of fifteen in the circle, to the match-making mamma in the stalls, every woman bows before him. The glitter of his eye sets every heart palpitating; and before that swaggering self-confidence even a lady-alderman would sink, cowed and abashed. Even his language, always forcible and often gory, is forgiven him. It is felt, in some indefinable way, to illustrate some subtle truths in human nature: truths, for the mere mention of which, papa would be sent to Coventry for a month, and Reggie (from Oxford) would be sharply asked "if all he'd learnt was how to pollute dear Ethel's ears!" (Ethel is "out," and affects shoddy semi-Bohemian "at-homes," and, therefore, can know nothing of the shady side of existence; but this by the way.) No, this reprobate can do anything, say anything, so long as he is beyond the footlights. With the lion comique of the music halls he can sing, or rather bawl, "Still I am the ladies' pet," for he is, equally with that sublime product of civilisation, a chartered libertine indeed. This being the attitude of society towards the well-dressed criminal, what better play, for a charity performance, could the Lytton amateurs have chosen than "Jim the Penman?" Echo and the huge audience they attracted answer, "What?" For Jim is an accomplished scoundrel, and, even if he wear an over-youthful look, can be certain of all their sympathies, which Mr. Alfred Crawford was not slow to secure. The oily old Baron is a good part, and Mr. H. A. Tonge is a good actor. The conjunction was auspicious. The character was firmly drawn and played with an insinuating manner quite in the spirit of the author. Miss Collas had very uphill work with Mrs. Ralston, an arduous part, but all that could be done by nerve and sheer personal force was managed with effect. Miss Walker was a pretty Agnes; winning, too. And among the less responsible players, who were successful in no half-hearted spirit of endeavour, were Miss Schofield, Mr. St John, and Mr. Gwyther, whose Dr. Pettywise was a sketch of undoubted humour, polish, and ability.

What a pity it is we are so cabined and confined, and lead such narrow petty lives. Your imagination is like a flower. It can't expand, grow, bud, burst into blossom, and scatter quickening seeds around it, when there's only a wee flower-pot, a scraping of soil, and a cheerless, poisoned air. You want light, space, nature. That's why Americans have such a gift of exaggeration, and such big ambitions. They have a hundred square yards to the individual to our three inches and a half. No wonder they can be so funny! Yes, a little imagination would be so useful. It would revolutionise amateur acting to begin with. An audience capable of seeing a hero in an ugly, little man, or accepting comedy from a young Apollo, whose clothes fitted him and were not like Gorgibuster's chess-board in pattern, would find a new world opened up for its enjoyment. Then actors would stand a chance. They would not be forced to anxiously consult the looking-glass before deciding if their art enjoined them to attempt the part. Now-a-days, you see, unless a fellow stands five feet one, and has a turned-up nose, bow legs, and the wardrobe of a lunatic, he cannot be credited with a sense of humour. Whilst to suppose for one moment that another could love to distraction and foil the villain without a forty-inch chest, the limbs of an antelope, a dark olive complexion, and purple eyes, would be to raise doubts of one's own sanity. It is but rare, therefore, that such a play as "The Old Love and the New" can be ventured on, for it has two heroes and a gentlemanly villain!

Even an order of that magnitude, however, does not appal the Whittington. They are Universal Providers ; and if the quality is not first-rate, it is at least sound and serviceable, and the goods are, above all, reasonable. Mr. Dickinson is over-tall for a hero (there, you see ! oh, for a larger flower-pot to grow up in !), and his looks and voice suggest the creepy-crawly villain rather than the gallant Titan who *will* defy the gods, and invariably wins ! But his Stratton was manly and earnest, and not without pathos. He gained by contrast, for his boy-rival in clever Miss Kingston's movingly-expressed affections was a poor thing in truth. Mr. Clark is conventional, and made Phipps a Yankee of the comic papers. He was laughable, but so is the White-eyed Kaffir—without being like anything in creation, and, least of all, a millionaire and a shrewd gentleman. The very antipodes to this—to reinforce my wit with Sheridan's—was Mr. Dudley's restrained, forcible, and eminently natural study of the French duellist, an admirable piece of acting. Miss Norton's bright, cheery Mrs. Brown, and Mr. Morgan's benevolent Babbage also shed a modest lustre on the club.

"The Guv'nor" is a perfect example of what may be called "the comedy of physical infirmity." Take a Putney boat builder afflicted with deafness, a young loafer burdened with a stutter, and a confectioner stricken with blindness, and subject to hallucination, and what tyro could not evolve the resultant complications ! The Arcadian simplicity of the imbroglio is matched with the ingenuous nature of the characterisation. Dialogue susceptible of the most disquieting misinterpretation is at a premium ; observation and natural revelation of character are at a corresponding discount. Good business for the dramatist, whose work is thus made easy. And good for the amateur, whose art is not required of him. His only rule of conduct is "Speak glibly when you're spoken to ; and do everything in a hurry." Now, this, if you have a reliable memory, and have attended a goodly number of rehearsals, presents no special difficulty. Hence the joy of the player cast for a part in this Vaudeville classic ; and hence the outspoken delight of the spectator, whose capacity for analysis need never be tested. In the "Child's History of England," or the "Guide to Knowledge," it is not hard work for the ordinary adult to scramble through a decent examination. So in "The Guv'nor," with its child-like situations, and pretty prattle of superficial repartee, he who is conversant with the rudiments of acting can cut a passable figure. This the Private Banks as a club may be said to have done, and a few of its members scored very nearly full marks. "Optimes" were common as oysters in June, and "Pessimés" rare as venison. The epicure, though, might have rejected both. Mr. Silverthorne, however, was not unworthy to tramp in Mr. David James's boat-builder boots ; Mr. Lee handled the perilous Butterscotch with tact and discretion ; and Mr. Wall amused everybody, some for one reason, some for another, as the horsey groom. Professional ladies played in this ; but in "Cut Off with a Shilling," which opened the bill, Miss Behnke was vivacious as Miss Farren, and delighted a good many with the delicacy of her comedy.

It is an accepted principle that those who deserve most in this vale of tears should receive least. (This is not a personal statement of grievances !) And chief among the sufferers are early comers to the play. Their patience, their enthusiasm, their sublime faith in the management—oh, cruel awakening in store for them !—demand a noble recompense. Demand, I say ; for they don't get it. No ; the wishiest, the washiest, the twiddly-twaddlyest of dramatic flour-and-water, unmixed, is their sole reward. Anything serves to beat a dog with. The poor—as opposed to the rich—public is the theatrical cur. Then fling any rubbish at its head ! And this policy commends itself to the amateurs as well, who will lavish any time and pains on the training and firing of the big gun, but are willing to open the battle with a squib, which can only damage its manipulators. It is well, therefore, to note that the West London are of a mind with Mr. Hare. They think otherwise, and have the courage of their convictions. Their revival of Westland Marston's "Hard Struggle" was a stride along the upward path. It was strongly played, and went smoothly and well. Mr. Stanton and Miss St. Lawrence could scarcely have been excelled. Their art is virile, and commands respect and close attention. Mr. Whatley and Miss Steele were also "express and admirable ;" and in apprehension of stage craft

and pregnant minutiae, the production reflected high credit upon all concerned. With such a preface, the volume was awaited with keen interest. As with all things eagerly sought, it partook of the nature of Dead Sea fruit when within the grasp. "The Parvenu" is, of course, an old play, and has been acted to perfection. Surprised and charmed by the novelty of its precursor, I expected too much. It was on a level with the previous piece; but, with greater opportunities, there was no advance. For which the club is not to blame, for that level was a lofty one. Mr. Sansbury here hung back till the finish was in sight, and then spurted finely and ran in an easy winner. His Claud was manly, yet romantic; reserved, yet impressive; quiet, yet intense. One more excellent performance to add to the many this season. Mr. Smart and Mr. Teversham were not badly suited by the baronet and Tracy; but Mr. Hart was a bird with one wing. His Ledger had humour but no pathos, and could only flutter, never fly. Miss Ricketts made a jolly loveable girl of Mary Ledger, and played the tree scene with real *chic*. Mrs. Edgley was fair but too sparsely coloured as the Modern Mother; and Gwendolen could have transferred half her exaggeration to her mamma with advantage to both.

If it is not an impertinent question, I should like to ask Mr. Burnand why he called his best quality farce "Betsy?" In making that young lady the headstone of the corner, he reduced the chance of every actress who assumes the character to the veriest shadow. Succì, at the close of a forty days' fast, is not more lean and lank and starved than this ill-used heroine. Everyone expects so much and gets so little. Why there is not even the spoonful of elixir, without which no faster can be genuine, for this poor skeleton of a part to keep lively on. And actresses, amateurs especially, are not children of Israel in captivity, and cannot make bricks without straw. Mrs. Walkes is the brightest soubrette on the boards; but even she could do no more for the scheming slavey than repeat her not over witty lines and keep the scene moving with some briskness. As it happens, though, Betsy and her lady friends can do little harm if they are unable to do much good, and with Mr. Quintin, Mr. Trollope, and Mr. Walkes on the spot the play was safe. None of these three has done anything quite so good before. Mr. Trollope is the very man for Mr. Birkett. If he has not succeeded to his figure he has to his style and his chuckle, and one can make shift with these. Mr. Walkes can be as grotesque as Terry upon occasion, and I shall not soon forget the wild, sandy, gallant gawk of an Irishman, whom he called McManus. It was the essence of farce, and would have won a "koind wurrd" from the author himself. As for Mr. Quintin, those who want to know what his Mr. Dawson was like can look up Lamb's essay on Munden. And even if they feel no curiosity, a closer acquaintance with the gentle Elia will be to their advantage. Mr. Quintin can tell a whole history with his face, and he told the graceless tutor's with a comic eloquence that convulsed his audience. Mr. Maltby was easily outshone at every turn; and to this performance must be awarded the palm for excellence during this or any other season I recall. Mr. Egginton and Mr. H. B. Butler were boyish lads who brightened the scene effectively; and Mrs. Charles Sim was almost equal to a miracle in making Madame Polenta a part worth playing. "Sunset" appropriately began the evening, and, helped by the glowing colour of Mr. Bright's clodhopper and the delicate tints of Miss Behnke's and Mrs. Sim's pretty heroines, made as brave a show as ever.

The Anomalies generally set the fashion, and think more of a novelty than of the fitness of a play. It is strange, therefore, to find them reviving "Plot and Passion," and argues the working of that actor-manager leaven which many a critic is beginning to fear will sour the whole baking ere long. Perhaps they have tired of Gilbert and his mechanical poetry, and Grundy and his stimulating comedy, and want a dip in the old sea of rule-of-thumb melodrama. Though to be sure there was Sardou still to tackle if they wished for a change. Well, they have every reason to feel braced up and nerved for a big new departure by this Saturday to Monday in Paris. What a power of good it would do the fashionable amateurs who sport it at country theatres, benefit *matinées*, and in barrack halls, to sit through one of these vigorous weeks of acting, peculiar to flourishing suburban clubs. They don't touch the ideal, of course; but there's all your money's worth of the real. They go at everything with their teeth set

so hard and jump every barrier with such a will, that when there's a tumble no thought of ridicule can possibly enter the minds of the most sceptical and unsympathetic. Mr. Tom Taylor's picturesque drama will admit of the finest acting imaginable, and this was not provided in even the tiniest quantity. Two of the leading parts were indeed but respectably filled; but despite this disadvantage, the actors had such a grip of the spirit of the piece and the lines of their characters, that they fairly interested and excited me. Mr. Bates is a rough and ready player, too fond of outline and chary of detail. As Desmarests, though, this is permissible, and he stirred his audience in more than one scene by genuine passion and force. Mr. Sansbury was playing the lovers of Robertson only the other day; now he is ripe for more romantic work. What next season may see it were too curious to enquire. Mr. Sansbury is certainly without a rival in strong work and might attempt anything. His De Neuville wanted grace and tenderness, but in sustained power it was admirable. Mr. Owen was a dull Fouché. The Minister was probably quiet and repressed, but never could have been heavy and lethargic. Mrs. Campbell made a plucky fight as the heroine, but she was outnumbered from the first, and among minor characters, Mr. Mallett and Miss Schreiber alone deserve express commendation.

It is well to give up a little time to the valleys. A life-time on the summit of Mont Blanc would make one feather-headed. To be exalted is no doubt a fine thing, but in this, as in most matters, it is possible to overshoot the mark. Besides, there is greater variety of scenery down below, and loveliness that appeals more closely to the heart of man. It must be applauded as wisdom then, this last step of the ambitious and accomplished Irving Club, by which they climbed down all the way from Shakespeare to Grundy. And yet more applause should be bestowed in that they trod the plains with as sure and graceful a step as ever they had scaled the heights. "The Silver Shield" is not an easy play, for all its simple looks and homely characters. And to shine in this after a course of blank verse and standing still like a stopped traveller to deliver every particle in one's scrip, shows versatility and a handsome balance of resource. Mrs. William Bell is just the actress for Alma Blake. She has strength, which is sorely needed for a part so long, a bold style, essential to a woman so full of tricky ways, and a pressure of humour like water in the main. The tap is but turned and not the daftest soul can deny what follows. This is Alma herself, she is always at high pressure; laughs and tears and scoldings come with a burst. The pathos here is a little hard, but this it is easy to forgive for the sake of the brightness and cheeriness of her happier moods. Mr. Grout is the one and only Dr. Dozey. It has long been a graphic sketch; he should now elaborate it into a highly finished picture. Mr. Sherbrooke is sound in all he does, from Fauntleroy's (or heroes almost as young) to Lears and Probitys. But rarely has he been so finished and efficient as in Dodson Dick. Broad comedy suits him, and he thinks it out as few comedians trouble to. Mr. Bell is hardly the vagabond Tom Potter was, but he is handsome, earnest, and interesting, and that is enough for most. Mr. Roberts, too, is the best Ned, the most possible, yet seen; though at several points in deadly conflict with the author. Mrs. Davies is stagey, but very very funny as the Doctor's wife; and Mrs. Renton, always touching and pretty as the girlish heroine, has added many a detail to her delicate and charming study.

There is usually a muddle first, followed by a stampede, when troops are sent into battle without an officer. No discipline, no unity; no unity, no strength. Mrs. Cecil Lamb's company were a regiment without leaders. They do not fight shoulder to shoulder and back each other up over the dangerous places. It was each for himself; and more than once it looked as though it might degenerate into a *saute qui peut*. "Still Waters Run Deep" cannot be captured save under the generalship of a veteran; and this Mrs. Lamb cannot be. Mr. Fox, for instance, might with a little judicious coaching and clever stage management, have been turned into a very serviceable Mildmay, a recruit capable of hard fighting. But without any one to show him how to harvest his resources, it was small wonder that half his strength was wasted upon air and the remainder was spent in half hearted blows. So, too, with Mr. Sharpe. His idea of Hawkesley was in nine points out of ten radically wrong. Mr. Willard and not Mr. Macdermott should have served him for a model. At every other sentence his con-

ception dealt one a slap in the face ; and a succession of shocks like this allows one no comfort of mind for the due regard of the play itself and the more suitable performances. Judged from the standpoint of what it was, and not from that of what it might have been, there were not a few merits. The actor can play firmly, and finds it not beyond his power to realise his intentions. The presence of an experienced eye at rehearsal would have made one or two ludicrous blunders of attitude quite impossible. But it's small use crying over spilt milk. Mrs. Lamb has a confidential, meek, and lady-like method which suggests a reticent débutante at an afternoon tea party. This bears not the slightest resemblance to the manner of Mrs. Sternhold, whose artistic province it is to supply a woman-of-the-world contrast to the childish Mrs. Mildmay, acted with little feeling for the character by Miss Chester. The most satisfactory effort of the evening was Mr. Skilbeck's "Potter," an amusing sketch ; though there was a certain amount of cleverness and consistency in the concluding "Old Cronies" of this gentleman and Mr. Sharpe.



Our Omnibus=Box.

The present number of *THE THEATRE* ends the 15th volume. The new volume commences with our next issue (July) and intending subscribers are invited to send in their names to the publishers at as early a date as possible. The past half year's volume contains a complete and accurate history of the drama, which is invaluable as a work of reference, in addition to its attractive portraits of theatrical celebrities.

The July number of *THE THEATRE* will contain a special descriptive account of the Passion Play at Oberammergau, from the pen of MR. JEROME K. JEROME, who is now abroad with the purpose of witnessing it.

Was there ever seen such a killing of the goose that laid the golden eggs as the present attitude of the Savoy triumvirate ? Is it not almost inexplicable that a combination of circumstances should have arisen which separates the three partners in this magnificent concern, and will eventually close the most profitable theatrical mart in all London ? Of course the twelve years series of Gilbert and Sullivan operas has been attended with a very considerable feathering of nests, but for all this, it seems mightily strange that three clever gentlemen should have united in giving Dame Fortune in her most benignant mood such a tremendous slap in the face. Seriously speaking, the position of affairs is very much to be regretted. We have become accustomed to a unique form of entertainment at the Savoy, but now the distorted and whimsical logic of Mr. Gilbert and the subtly humorous tone-pictures of Sir Arthur Sullivan will be with us no longer. Oh, the pity of it ! Willow, willow, waly ! Will not the ex-partners even treat us to a farewell serenade before the die is cast ?

The striking success of Mr. Sydney Grundy's two latest productions opens up a large field for speculation. Both "A Pair of Spectacles" and "A Village Priest" are about as unconventional in their style and treatment as any play seen in London during the last few years. Is the theatre-going public prepared to permit our dramatists to calmly throw overboard all the canons of stage-construction which we have been wont to regard as indispensable ? It would really seem so. Take the Garrick play, for instance. No love interest ; no female

interest even ; no interest at all, in fact, except in the elaborate characterisation of the two principal parts—a couple of old men with strongly marked individualities. And yet the effect of it all is so irresistible that Mr. Hare's theatre is thronged nightly, and everyone comes away delighted as if with some great dramatic revelation.

At the Haymarket, on the other hand, we have a drama of unrelieved sombreness. What thread of interest there is in "A Village Priest" is of the most uncertain, shifty, and zig-zag order. The play has no proper hero, no regular heroine, and no "villain" of any kind. Still, the people appear to like it, for they flock to Mr. Tree's portico by thousands. The dramatist of the future will really have to draw up a new code of rules for himself. The present one appears to be composed almost entirely of exceptions.

Mr. A. W. Pinero read his play, "The Profligate," to the members of the Birkbeck Institution on the evening of the 16th May. From the opening of the reading, by the recital of the quaint piece of poetry giving the motive of the drama, to the close, Mr. Pinero was very successful, and, what is more to the point, each character was individualised by excellent dramatic effect. The reading was given in aid of the Library Fund of the Birkbeck Institution.

During the past month Mr. Irving has been delighting crowded audiences with two of his finest impersonations. May 10th saw the revival of "The Bells," in which the great actor gave us his marvellous psychological study as Matthias ; and on May 19th "Louis XI." occupied the evening bill with an adequate cast. In this play Mr. William Terriss resumed his character of Nemours with great spirit. "The King and the Miller ; or, Cramond Brig," one-act drama, by W. Murray, was played as a first piece.

An interesting recital was given by Mr. J. H. Leigh, M.A., at the Steinway Hall on May 2nd, he himself appearing to great advantage as Edward III., in an extract from a play of that name, imputed by some to Shakespeare ; but that the great poet did write it there is considerable doubt. The interest turns on the endeavour of the Sovereign to induce the Countess of Salisbury to listen to his illicit passion. The character of the lady was shown with considerable power and intelligence by Miss Mary Rorke. The extract was given under the title of "The King and the Countess."

"Othello" was the last of Shakespeare's plays included in Mr. Benson's programme, and was produced on April 24th, at the Globe Theatre. The experience gained during the season probably made it one of his best impersonations, though not a great performance. Mrs. Benson was a weak but agreeable Desdemona, and Miss Rose Mellor excellent as Emilia. The Iago of Mr. Cartwright was meritorious.

On Wednesday afternoon, April 23rd, Mr. Charles Wyndham renewed his success as Citizen Sangfroid in "Delicate Ground." Mr. George Giddens was a clever Alphonse de Grandier, and Miss Mary Moore a pleasantly capricious Pauline. "Trying It On" was played at the same *matinée*, and Mr. Wyndham in it exhibited his wonted sparkle and rattle as Walsingham Potts. The productions were so much appreciated as to be repeated at a subsequent *matinée*.

Miss Melnotte re-opened the Royalty Theatre on May 17 with "The Barrister," the farcical comedy, by G. M. Fenn and J. H. Darnley, that had such a successful run at the Comedy, and has been so well received in the provinces. Clever as he was, Mr. Mervin has hardly that lightness of touch requisite for the bewildered and harassed counsel, learned in the law, whose fortunes depend on the recovery of his missing black bag. Miss Susie Vaughan resumed her original most amusing *role* of Miss Foster. A new comedietta, entitled "The Bailiff," by Fred W. Broughton, was the first piece. In it a rather cruel practical joke is played by Benjamin Grattan (Mr. R. Medlicott) on his brother Daniel (Mr. Walter McEwen), which we have not space to detail here. Miss

Mary Kingsley was pleasing and artistic as Minnie Daniel's daughter. The dialogue was good, and Mr. McEwen acted remarkably well.

"The Wrong Door," by Ina Leon Cassilis, produced at a *matinée* at the Comedy on May 20th, is a crude, extravagant farce, with a germ of dramatic verity in it. It is a satire on the nauseousness of sham piety not entirely in the best taste, and, such as it was, owed its measure of success to the vivacious acting of Miss Agnes Thomas in the character of a fast actress with a breakdown. With the one other exception of Mr. Cecil Thornbury in a "Stiggins" part, the cast was quite inefficient.

The Italian Opera season successfully opened at Covent Garden on Monday, 19th May, with "Faust," Madame Nuovina, a *débutante*, who has earned success at Brussels in the part, being cast for Marguerite. As an artist she more than realised expectations, and if her voice is lacking somewhat in power, it is sweet and effective in *timbre*. On the 20th, "Carmen" was given, with Mdlle. Zélie de Lussan as the Gipsy, a part she has so recently essayed with triumph at the sister house, that comment on her performance is unnecessary.

Miss Annie Hughes is luckily of a changeable disposition. The other day she announced her intention of leaving the stage; but barely were the words out of her mouth than she was sorry she spoke, and forthwith annulled her own *fiat*. This is as it should be. We can spare several of our younger actresses before this clever little lady.

No one need be sorry that the High Court of Justice (Chancery Division) has come down with a firm hand upon the casual artists who wished to combine "turns" at the Pavilion and the Tivoli. There were clauses in the engagements of most of them binding them not to appear within a mile of the "hall" at Piccadilly Circus, but they seem to have regarded this restriction as a mere empty form. The judge has done good service in teaching these unbusiness-like people that an agreement is an agreement, if not all the world over at any rate within the jurisdiction of our own particular bench.

Mr. J. G. Kersley gave a *matinée* at Terry's Theatre on Tuesday, May 13. "In Love," a comediotta (author unannounced) though with occasional flashes of humour and smart dialogue, was generally weak. A young fellow who is loved by an artless and very charming girl, disregards the treasure he may possess and wants a woman who can shine in every way. He is brought to his senses by the girl's sister-in-law, who assumes to be a perfect paragon, but makes herself hateful by the airs and graces she gives herself. This part, Amabel Burton, was well played by Miss Irene Rickard, who also sang nicely. The trifle preceded "As Large as Life," a new farcical piece in three acts by Arthur Shirley. The author has captured remarkably funny ideas, but must re-write his piece, for it hung fire lamentably at times; with fresher dialogue and the situations brought closer together it would be very amusing. An impecunious artist, Mulready Splurge, for want of a model, makes sketches of his opposite neighbour, Ulysses Tinkler, a harmless fellow in love with Elsie Bimble. These sketches he developes in three characters all with the same face. The one represents a lion tamer, the other a celebrated actress at the "El Dorado," and the third a private gentleman. The canvasses are given as security to a landlord for an unpaid hotel bill. He disposes of two of them—the actress to a silly little fop who is in love with her—the other to a fascinating widow, Mrs. Morency (well played by Miss Dairolles) who purchases it to hang in her drawing-room as the portrait of her husband and so put a stop to the attentions of Ruccio and Graccio, two Corsicans who persecute her with their attentions (these parts are cleverly written and were very drolly acted by Messrs. Henry Bedford and Ivan Watson). Joshua Bimble from seeing the picture of the private gentleman is led to believe that it is Splurge, whose relatives wish to bring about a match with Elsie. Mrs. Splurge, with her baby, comes in search of her truant lord, and recounts her sorrows to Bimble, so that when Tinkler tries to pay his addresses to Elsie, he is looked upon as a married man who has deserted his wife. At Mrs. Morency's, when the picture of the "lion tamer" is seen, poor Tinkler is

present at a party, and the artful widow makes him own to being her husband, and he is regarded by Bimble as a bigamist and is challenged by both Corsicans. Fleeing from them he takes refuge in the Zoological Gardens, and meets the little silly fop, who takes him for the beautiful actress masquerading in men's clothes, the actress being really Tinkler's twin sister, a virtuous matron, who closely resembles him. The Corsicans in pursuit, come upon Tinkler and throw him into the bear-pit, from which he is happily rescued, and after his trials—Splurge having explained away how the unfortunate Tinkler has had his face made unwarrantable use of—the latter is graciously accepted by Bimble for Elsie. The character of Tinkler was one that Mr. Charles Hawtrey or Mr. Glenney would have revelled in—but as an apology was made for Mr. Kersley that he was suffering from a severe cold, etc., we must pass over his shortcomings.

Miss Sylvia Grey (the subject of our first portrait), one of our most charming dancers, and a worthy successor to Miss Kate Vaughan, is a Londoner by birth, though of Swiss extraction. At the age of ten, Miss Grey played children's parts with Mr. E. H. Brooks in his Shakesperean round of characters. When twelve years old, Miss Grey left the stage to take up her education again, undistracted by the excitement of the drama, and later, being very fond of music, became a graduate of Trinity College, Manchester Square, and joined Mr. Steadman's choir, taking lessons of him in singing. On her return to the boards, Miss Grey gained reputation as Louise in the "Two Orphans;" as the Prince of Wales, "Richard III;" in "Oliver Twist," "The Colleen Bawn," and "Jo;" as Violet in "Confusion" with Mr. Thorne, and in "Brother Sam" with Mr. Lytton Sothorn, and was offered a three years' engagement by Mr. Charles Wyndham. Although as an actress the fair subject of our photograph had every prospect, yet she had a passion for dancing, and so studied and practised hard, first under Signor Espiroza, then under Mdme. Katti Lanner, and finally under Mr. D'Auban. Her first success was achieved six years ago, since which time Miss Sylvia Grey has not only persevered, but has attained at realizing the "very poetry of motion," graceful, delicate, and irreproachable dancing. Miss Grey is also well known as a teacher of dancing, from which source she makes a very large income from members of the best families and their children. Both in Australia and America Miss Grey became a very great favourite; she speaks enthusiastically of both continents and looks forward to re-visiting them with pleasure. Miss Grey is now playing Donna Christina in "Ruy Blas and the Blasé Roué" at the Gaiety, of which company she has now been a member four years, and has lately made a decided hit by her archness and charm in Miss Minnie Bell's brightly written "Gavotte."

Mr. Jerome K. Jerome, the subject of our second photograph, is now 29 years of age. His connection with the stage commenced when he was 18 years old, but after two years "roughing it" in the provinces, he came to the conclusion that he had mistaken his vocation, and so flung off the sock and buskin. The experience then gained has been invaluable to him, however, and he afterwards gave an account of it in his little book, "On the Stage and Off." Mr. Jerome then enlarged his insight into human nature for some few years in various ways. He was by turns schoolmaster, penny-a-liner, reporter, shorthand writer, and finally settled down to journalism and literature. His next work to the one already quoted was "Idle Thoughts of an Idle Fellow," and soon after came his first dramatic venture "Barbara," produced by Mr. C. H. Hawtrey at the Globe Theatre, June 19th, 1886, and for which he received the unique compliment paid to the author of a one-act piece of a "double call." "Barbara" was followed by another one-act play, "Sunset," (Comedy, February 13th, 1888), and next by "Fennel," (Novelty, March 31st, 1888). On the 18th of June of the same year, was tried his first three act comedy, "Wood-Barrow Farm," which achieved a great success at the time, has been heard of since, and will in all probability be seen again in London very shortly. Mr. Jerome last year published his "Stageland," and "Three Men in a Boat," both of which ran through a number of editions. All his books have been translated into several continental languages, and have had the honour of being printed in America without his permission. His latest dramatic production "New Lamps for Old," (Terry's Theatre, Feb. 8th, 1890), is still running and filling the house

nightly, and in America, a play written by Mr. Jerome in conjunction with Mr. Addison Bright has, in a somewhat altered form, been lately successfully produced by Mr. Wilson Barrett.

Mr. Beerbohm Tree gave one of his very best programmes on his Wednesday *matinée* of May 7th. A dramatic sketch, "Rachel," by Clo Graves, introduced Miss Laura Villiers in the title-*rôle*, and though the actress was not equal to the exigencies of the character, there were glimpses of power and at times almost genius, particularly in the final moments of the death scene, where the dead actress is supposed to roll down some steps. The story appeared in Hood's Comic Annual under the title of "Death and Rachel," and tells of the despair of the great French actress when she discovers that her fate is sealed and that she has only a few more hours to live. Mr. Tree played Gringoire in the "Ballad-Monger," with his usual success, but the event of the afternoon was the appearance of Miss Julia Neilson as Clarice in Gilbert's play "Comedy and Tragedy." Those who had formed a high opinion of the young actress's capacities were not disappointed. Miss Neilson fairly surpassed every expectation, whether as simulating the "comedy," or in her agony of the "tragedy," and may be looked upon as the coming actress of the day. Mr. Fred Terry was a distinguished and impassioned D'Aulnay, and Mr. Lewis Waller dignified and cool as the Duc D'Orleans. He would have made infinitely more of the part, but that he was suffering the most intense agony from a rheumatic attack, and it was almost a pity that an announcement to this effect was not published, so that allowance might have been made.

"Changes," A three act comedy written by John Aylmer, was produced on Friday afternoon, April 25th, at Toole's Theatre, but as the piece will probably never be heard of again—it was so weak and the dialogue so puerile—there is no occasion to dilate on it. Mr. Walter Arnould as a page, and Miss Mary Collette as a bright, impulsive young lady, were the only two in the cast worthy of mention.

Mrs. Bandmann-Palmer appeared in the title-*role* of "Mary Stuart" at the Grand, on April 28th, and was so gifted a representative of the character that one cannot but be sorry that this talented actress is not more frequently seen in London. The Hon. Lewis Wingfield's adaptation of Schiller's play is not one that would, as a rule, make it acceptable.

"Miss Tomboy," Robert Buchanan's play founded on "The Relapse," was placed in the evening bill at the Vaudeville on Tuesday evening, May 5th, and was most favourably received. Miss Winifred Emery is inimitable as Fanny Hoyden, and Mr. Tom Thorne and Mr. Frank Gillmore have improved on their original conceptions of Lord Foppington and Tom Fashion.

Mr. John Todhunter's play, "Helena in Troas," possesses considerable merit, and a like verdict may be passed on his later work "A Sicilian Idyll," produced at the Club Theatre, Bedford Park, on May 5th, and twice subsequently during the week, under the direction of Mr. Lys Baldry, who also artistically designed the costumes and properties and painted most of the really pretty scenery. Mr. Todhunter's flowing and vigorous lines were only done justice to by Amaryllis, Miss Florence Farr (Mrs. Edward Emery), whose experience enabled her to cope with the delivery of blank verse, though Miss Lily Linfield gave them with archness and piquancy. As Thestylis, she danced with the *abandon* of a very Bacchante and gained a well-deserved *encore*. Alcander a mountain shepherd, who conquers the aversion of Amaryllis to wedded life by sheer force of will, was vigorously portrayed by Mr. H. M. Paget, and Mr. John Smith as Daphnis, another shepherd who is at first enamoured of the hard-hearted Amaryllis, but is consoled by Thestylis, to whom he transfers his affection, spoke his lines well. A more accurate judgment would have been formed of "A Sicilian Idyll," had Mr. Todhunter provided a few printed copies of his work. The incidental music was composed by Mr. Bertram Luard Selby, and was melodious, and the very appropriate choruses were efficiently rendered by Mrs. Campbell Perugini, Misses Christine

and Janet Connell, Mr. William Allen, etc., and the picturesque processions and dances were cleverly arranged by Miss Linfield, more particularly bearing in mind the circumscribed space at her command.

"New Lamps for Old" reached its 100th performance on the 21st instant, on which occasion Mr. Alfred Bishop played the part of Poselthwaite in place of Mr. F. Kerr, who has gone to the Shaftesbury.

There is not the slightest truth in the report that Miss Grahame intends shortly producing a new play by Mr. Carton; she has accepted a play by this gentleman, but owing to the increasing success and heavy advance bookings for "New Lamps for Old" the production of Mr. Carton's play may not take place this year.

Mr. J. H. Darnley will shortly produce at a *matinée* at "Terry's" his three act farcical comedy "Wanted a Wife."

The Cordwainers' Company have resolved to keep open the Fine Art Exhibition at the Hall of the Company, 7, Cannon Street, E.C., for another month, from the 17th instant, charging One Shilling for admission, and devoting the proceeds to the Fund now being raised for the relief of the Survivors of the Balaclava Charge.

A life-size portrait of Mr. Willard has just been completed by Mr. A. Leicester Burroughes, and is now hanging in the *foyer* of the Shaftesbury Theatre.

Mr. H. A. Jones's long-expected play, "Judah," was produced at the Shaftesbury Theatre on the 21st May with every promise of enduring success. That Mr. Jones fully deserves such for his most bold and original swerve from conventional dramatic lines will, we think, be admitted by all. A detailed notice will appear in THE THEATRE for next month. In the meantime, we can only congratulate the author on an artistic success as complete as the interpretation it was his fortune to secure.

In "The Bride of Love," produced at an Adelphi *matinée* on May 21st, and which we can but here barely notice, Mr. Buchanan is at once true and false to his poetical and artistic instincts. Verbal beauties abound, and mythological intricacies are resolved with an ingenuity that is commendable. The low comedy of the play, however, rings false in its connection, and frequently verges on vulgarity, and the possible beauty of the whole is missed through a wilful writing-down to the smaller intellects of an audience. The piece was generally well rendered.

By an unfortunate error the portrait of Mr. John Hare that appeared in our last issue was attributed to Barraud, instead of to Messrs. Elliott and Fry. The latter gentlemen have our sincere apologies for the mistake.

This year's exhibition (the 122nd) of the Royal Academy will not be looked upon as one in which many great pictures will be found; nor, indeed, any single canvas that will give its stamp as to the year being a "comet" one. Of portraits there are as usual very many; these we will pass over, and, in the limited space at our command, draw attention to those pictures most worthy of notice. Sir Frederick Leighton, the President, contributes three paintings, "Solitude" (166), "The Bath of Psyche" (243), (purchased by the President and Council under the Chantrey bequest), and the "Tragic Poetess" (310). The last named most exhibits the artist's power. "The Cast Shoe" (19), by Robert W. Macbeth, A. (also purchased under the Chantrey bequest), has already given rise to discussion, but is masterly. Luke Fildes, R.A., sends "A Daughter of the Ghetto" (20); T. B. Kennington's "Homeless" (24) is exquisitely pathetic; "The Moon is up, and yet it is not Night" (25), by Sir J. E. Millais, R.A., shows some of his best work in a forest with deer; "La pia de Tolomei" (26), Edwin Long, R.A., is beautiful in execution; "Davy Jones's Locker"

(81), W. L. Wyllie, A., is skilfully painted and rich in colour, but naturalists may cavil at some of the details; "After Waterloo: Sauve qui peut!" (123) tells its own dramatic story in the rush and scramble, and the expression of the fugitives, who carry Napoleon along on his grey charger in their midst. Hubert Herkomer, R.A., has a true picture of rural life in "Our Village" (143); Sir John Gilbert, R.A., has one of his characteristic paintings in "Onward" (186); "The Golden Lure" (202), by Rob Sauber, a perfectly drawn nude figure of a female Ambition resting almost on a bubble will attract much attention; Briton Riviere's "Rus in Urbe" (224), a boy and collie, is clever; "The Sculptor" (270), by J. B. Burgess, R.A., is notable for the expression of the various faces; his "Freedom of the Press" (337) (diploma work) is also excellent. J. Seymour Lucas's "Louis XI." (291) tells vividly the story of how the monarch would sit at the tables of his meanest subjects; "The Frigidarium" (324) is distinguished by Alma Tadema's perfection of finish and antiquarian lore; G. H. Boughton's "The Puritan's First Winter in New England" (396) is most interesting; "A Patient Life of Unrewarded Toil" (437), G. F. Watts, R.A., an old grey horse, worn out and neglected is tender in treatment; "He walks to London" (507), by James Sant, R.A., shows Oliver Twist haggard and half-starved on his momentous journey; "The Death of Cleopatra" (551) is a grand picture, and the best that the Hon. John Collier has yet painted; Dudley Hardy's grouping and characterisation in "The Dock Strike, London, 1889," (671) are well worthy of notice; "The Last Blessing" (758), a dying youth, disconsolate mother, and the priest at the foot of the bed, is truly human; Henry R. Steer's picture "Barnaby Rudge and His Mother in Chigwell Churchyard" (973) has much to commend it; as has also Arthur Hacker's "Væ Victis" (1005), the sack of Morocco by the Almohades; William Logsdail has given a true picture of the city pageant in his "Ninth of November" (1028), but the sky and atmosphere are scarcely in keeping with the sloppiness of the streets; "Vashti Deposed" (1049), by Ernest Normand, is rich in colouring; Eugène de Blaas tells his story well in "Scandal" (1062), and Solomon J. Solomon's "Hippolyta" (1063) is an elaborate rich decorative work, elevated in tone; "By Order of the Court" (1146), by Stanhope A. Forbes, an auction of poor people's effects, has great attractions; and G. P. Jacomb-Hood's "Witches' Dance" (1166) is a veritable Brocken saturnalia. Among the purely dramatic pictures that may interest readers of THE THEATRE are an indifferent portrait of Miss Phyllis Broughton (331, A. Dampier May), "Diva Theodora Imperatrix, Empress and Comedian" (346, Val C. Prinsep, A.), "Peg Woffington criticised in the place of her portrait" (526, Gertrude Homan), "Juliet Capulet and Friar Lawrence" (992, Theodore Wores), "Ophelia, 'There's Rue for You'" (1041, Henrietta Rae), "Première Scène de Rheingold" (1109, H. Fantin-Latour), "Miss Agnes Huntington" (1123, by Herman G. Herkomer); and in the Sculpture Room, "The Pet of the Ring" (2039), a relief in wax, by Gilbert W. Bayes.

The Grosvenor Gallery exhibition this year is hardly the best that has been seen within its walls, we regret that it is impossible to do more than give the subjects and numbers of the most striking pictures. Portrait of D. Q. Orchardson, R.A. (36) painted by himself for the Uffizi Gallery Florence; "Mary, Queen of Scots in the woods of Rosemeath" (41) J. Lavery; "The Flight from Bethlehem" (44) Arthur Hacker; "The Weekly Dispatch" (45) Frank Brangwyn; "Girl at the Gate" (51) George Clausen; "Maternity" (68) Lioness and Cubs, John M. Swan; "Dimanche des Rameaux" (70) Helen H. Hatton; "Light of Light" (82) Mrs. Marian Stokes; Infant Saviour and Virgin (peculiar reflection); "A Silent Appeal" (88) Charles Vigor; "The Last Boat" (92) Tom Graham; "A Long, a Last Farewell" (93) W. J. Laidlay; "The Dead Tyrant" (101; wolf and sheep) George Wetherbec; "Audrey and Her Goats" (109) Arthur Melville; "Little Stella" (118) J. Sant, R.A.; "A Venetian Fog" (122) Miss Hilda Montalba; John Pettie's finished sketch of "The Traitor" (127); "Stonehaven from Bervie Bracs" (139) Sir William Fettes Douglas, P.R.S.A.; Portrait of Henry M. Stanley (140) Miss. E. M. Merrick; "The First of September" (149) Dendy Sadler; "The Court of Criminal Appeal" (150) portraits of the judges, &c., by Sir Arthur Clay; "Miss Maud Millett" (165) Charles W. Bartlett; "The Druids bringing in the Mistletoe" (173) Geo. Henry and E. A. Hornel; "The Boy and the Dryad" (185) C. N. Kennedy; "Diana Twilight and Dawn" (190) Wm Stott, of Oldham; "In Watering Order" (196) James Princep Beadle; "The Widow" (202) Miss

Flora M. Reid ; " A Moment's Rest " (215) W. E. Norton ; " Hand in Hand while our Life was May " (215) Robert Noble ; " Sail ho ! " (220) F. Brangwyn, " For those in Peril on the Sea " (242) Claude Hayes ; " A Room in a Brussels Alms House " (248) Hubert Vos ; " Olivia " (253) F. Markham Skipworth ; " Joe " (249) T. B. Kennington ; " The Wreck " (258) W. L. Wyllie ; " A County Council " (273) C. H. Poingdestre (donkeys and geese ; humorous) ; " Called to the Bar " (281) quaint. Arthur Dodd ; " The Sheep-pen " (290) H. Hughes Stanton ; " On Wimbledon Common " (323) Miss E. D. Smith ; " On the Cornish Coast " (332) L. R. O'Brien, P.R.C.A. ; " The Javonaïse Dancers " (341) Arthur Melville, A.R.S.A. ; " An Essex Meadow " (367) James Orrock. Some pictures have been hung on the stairs as an experiment. It does not generally favourably commend itself.

The New Gallery will repay a visit. Although many of the pictures are small in size they are of artistic value. A detailed notice must be held over, but we may call particular attention to " Dew Drenched Furze " (119) Sir John Millais ; to C. N. Kennedy's " Perseus " (162) ; to Miss Anna Alma Tadema's " Longing " (87) ; and to her talented father's " Eloquent Silence " (51). G. H. Boughton's " Winter in Brabant " (113) is dainty ; and James Charles's " Selsey Bill " (223) is vigorous. There are some excellent portraits, and the hanging is well arranged.

The Hanover Gallery has some of the best examples of foreign artists, and at Messrs. Agnew's Gallery, R. Burne Jones's four pictures " The Legend of the Briar Rose " are attracting much attention. The " Great Jubilee Picture," painted by W. E. Lockhart by command of Her Majesty the Queen, is on view at Waterloo House.

New plays produced and important revivals in London, from April 18, 1890, to May 20, 1890.

(*Revivals are marked thus*°).

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| April 18 | " Simon the Smith, or A Mediæval Strike." Comic operatic romance, book by E. W. Bowles, music by Louis N. Parker and Merton Clark. Victoria Hall, Bayswater. |
| " 22 | " The Violin Players," adaptation in one act, by Alfred Berlyn, of François Coppée's play <i>Le Luthier de Crémone</i> . Shaftesbury. |
| " 23 | " The Cabinet Minister," original farce in four acts by A. W. Pinero. Court. |
| " 23° | " Delicate Ground," comic drama by Charles Dance. <i>Matinée</i> . Criterion. |
| " 23* | " Trying It On," farce, by William Brough. <i>Matinée</i> . Criterion. |
| " 24* | " Othello," Shakespeare's tragedy. Globe. |
| " 25 | " Changes," comedy in three acts, by John Aylmer. <i>Matinée</i> . Toole's. |
| " 28° | " Mary Stuart," Hon. Lewis Wingfield's adaptation of Schiller's tragedy. Grand. |
| " 28 | " Work and Wages, or The Great Strike," five act drama, by William Bourne. Morton's Theatre, Greenwich. |
| May 1 | " Daisy," comedy opera, written by F. Grove Palmer, composed by Henry J. Wood. Kilburn Town Hall. |
| " 3 | " Esther Sandraz," play in three acts, by Sydney Grundy, placed in evening bill. St. James's |
| " 3 | " The Tiger," musical farce, libretto by F. C. Burnand, music by Edward Solomon, placed in evening bill. St. James's. |
| " 5° | " A Miser," one act drama by Julian Cross. Globe, |
| " 5 | " Theodora," play in six acts, adapted by Robert Buchanan from Sardou's work, placed in evening bill. Princess's |
| " 5 | " A Sicilian Idyll," original pastoral play, by John Todhunter. Club Theatre, Bedford Park. |
| " 7° | " Comedy and Tragedy," one act play, by W. S. Gilbert. <i>Matinée</i> . Haymarket. |
| " 7 | " Rachel," dramatic sketch, by Miss Clo Graves. <i>Matinée</i> . Haymarket. |
| " 8 | " A Modern Marriage," four act play by Neville Doone. <i>Matinée</i> . Comedy. |

- May 10* "She Stoops to Conquer," Goldsmith's comedy arranged in three acts. Criterion.
- " 10* "The Bells," (evening bill). Lyceum.
- " 12 "Paul Kauvar," drama in four acts by Steele Mackay. Drury Lane.
- " 12* "The Married Rake," farce. Drury Lane.
- " 12 "A Life's Bondage," four act drama, by H. Byrton and Arthur Shirley. Marylebone.
- " 13 "The Ferry Girl," operetta, written by the Dowager Marchioness of Downshire, composed by Lady Arthur Hill. *Matinée*. Savoy.
- " 13 "In Love," comedietta, (author unannounced). *Matinée*. Terry's.
- " 13 "As Large as Life," farcical piece in three acts, by Arthur Shirley. *Matinée*. Terry's.
- " 17* "The Barrister," farcical comedy in three acts, by G. M. Fenn and J. H. Darnley. Royalty.
- " 17 "The Bailiff," comedietta by Fred. W. Broughton. Royalty.
- " 19* "Louis XI, (evening bill) Lyceum.
- " 20 "My Mother," original farce in three acts, by Miss Amy Steinberg. *Matinée*. Toole's.
- " 20 "Time's Revenges," one act play, by W. Edwardes Sprange. *Matinée*. Toole's.
- " 20 "The Wrong Door," three act farcical comedy by Ina Leon Cassilis. *Matinée*. Comedy.

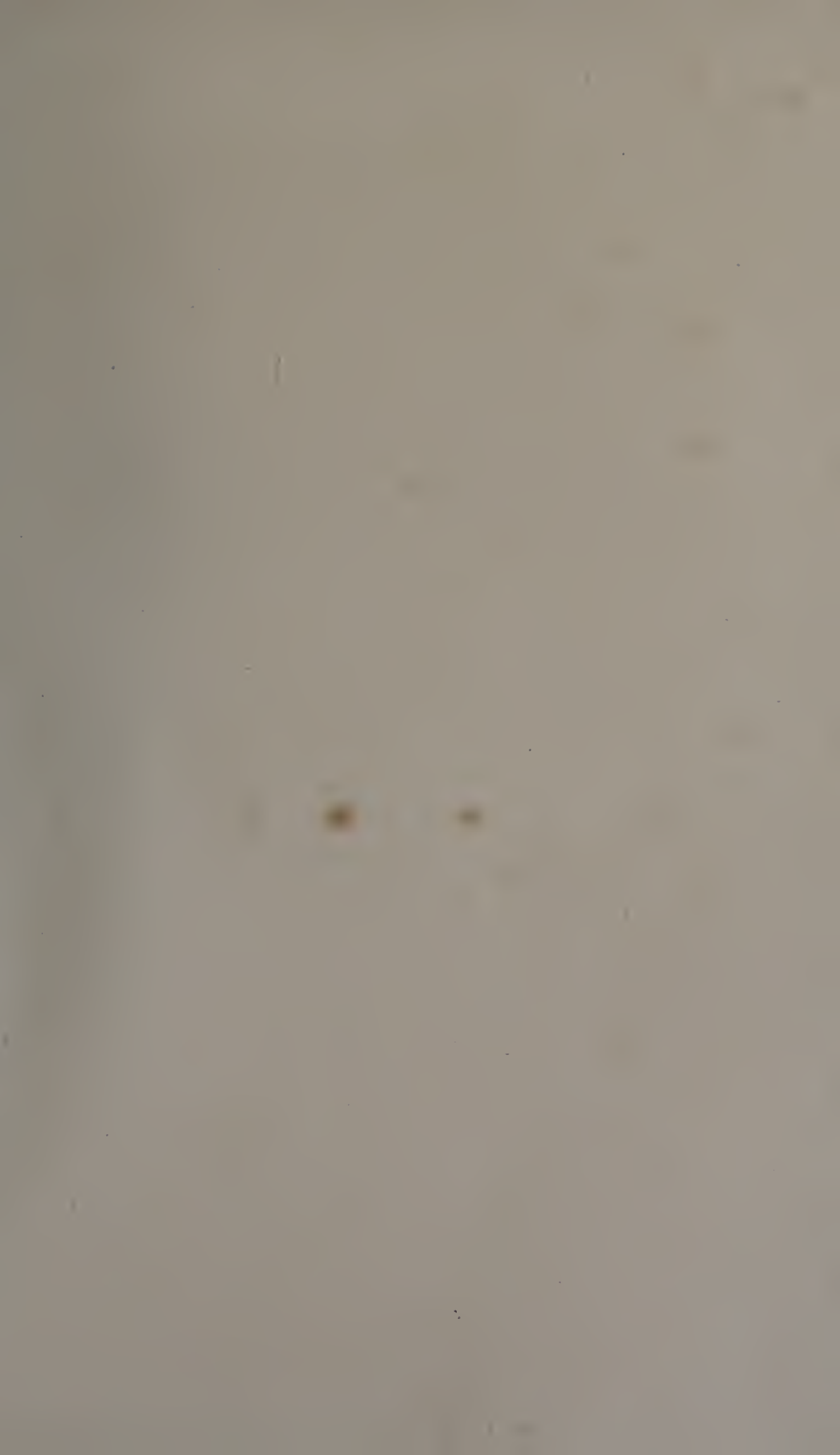
In the Provinces from April 14, 1890, to May 12, 1890.

- April 19 "The Brazilian," comic opera in three acts, book by Max Pemberton and W. Lestocq, composed by Mons. Chassaigne, (copy-right purposes). *Matinée*. T.R. Newcastle-on-Tyne.
- " 21 "Miss Maritana, or Not for Jo," three act operatic burlesque by Lieut. G. Nugent and J. W. Whitbread. Queen's R. T., Dublin.
- " 25 "Rescued from Death," drama in four acts, by Hugh Montgomery. Alhambra Theatre, Burrow-in-Furness.
- " 28 "Victory," four act drama, by J. Hewetson Porter. T. R. Warrington.
- May 5 "The Mesmerist," farcical comedy in three acts, by Fred. Jarman. T. R. Bath.
- " 5 "The Solicitor," three act farcical comedy, by J. H. Darnley. Royal Court Theatre, Liverpool.
- " 7* "The Lord of Burleigh," one act comedietta, by Horace Lennard. New Theatre, Richmond.
- 12 "The Coiner's Dream," one act drama by Cecil N. T. Fitzroy. Lecture Hall, Derby.

In Paris from April 12, 1890, to May, 13, 1890.

- April 17 "Menages Parisiens," three act comedy, by Albin Valabrégue. Nouveautés.
- " 18 "Le Roman d'une Conspiration," five act play by Henry Fouquier and Fabrice Carré, founded on a novel by Arthur Ranc. Ambigu.
- " 30 "Les Trois Souhairs," comic opera in one act, written and composed by Georges Villain. Bouffes Parisiens.
- May 3 "Le Bejaune," three act farcical comedy, by M.M. Burani and Cermoise. Variétés.
- " 13 "Dante," four act lyrical drama, libretto by Edouard Blau, composed by Benjamin Godard.
- " 13 "Jaques-Fayan," drama in one act, by Sergeant Bobillot. Chateau d'Eau.





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